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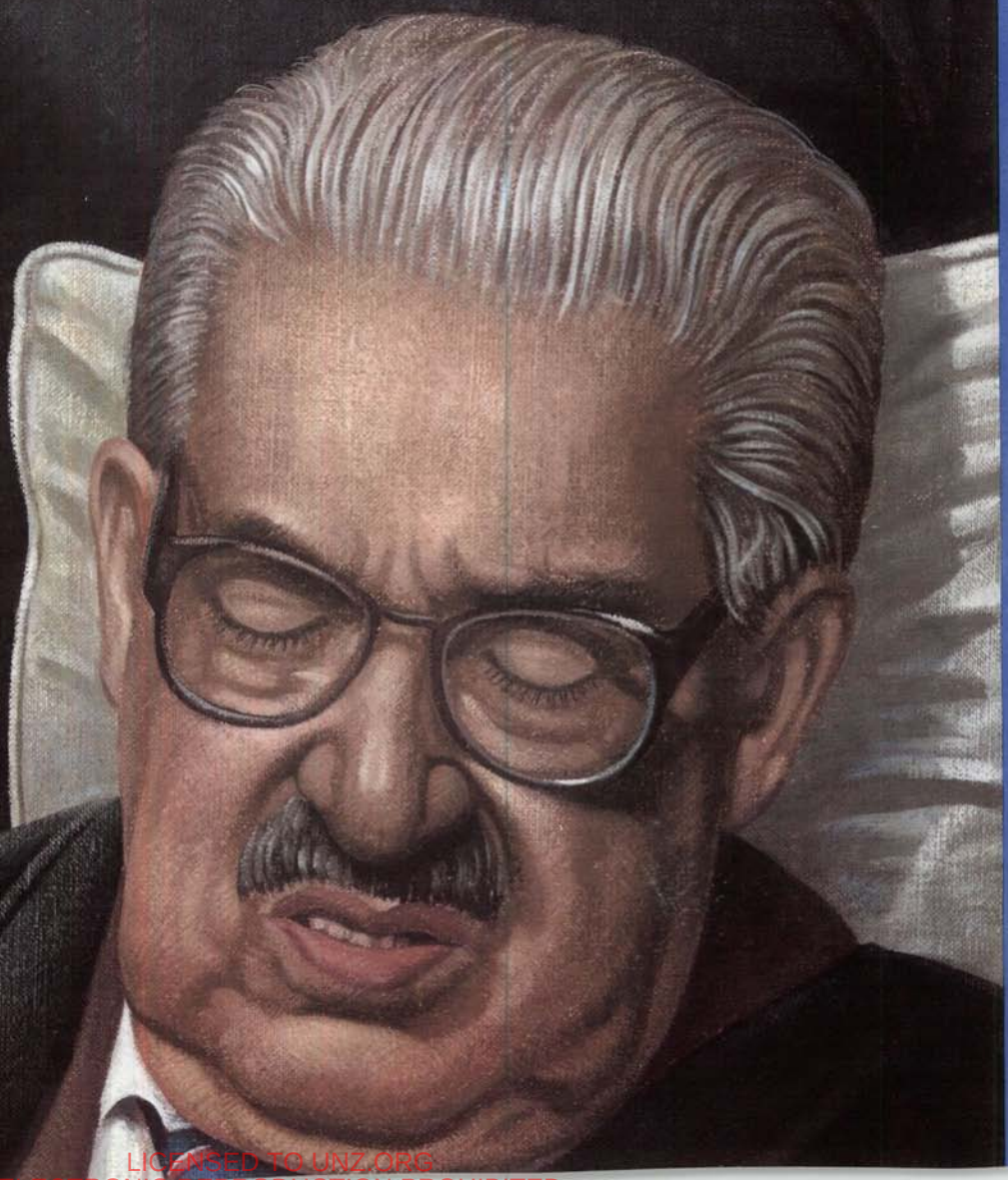
Tracking Down Jim Wright – Page 35

NATIONAL REVIEW



WHILE JUSTICE SLEEPS

WHO'S RUNNING THE SUPREME COURT?
By Terry Eastland

REAGAN'S TAX REVOLUTION: HOW WE DID IT
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THE IDLE PROFESSORS: PAYING TEACHERS NOT TO TEACH
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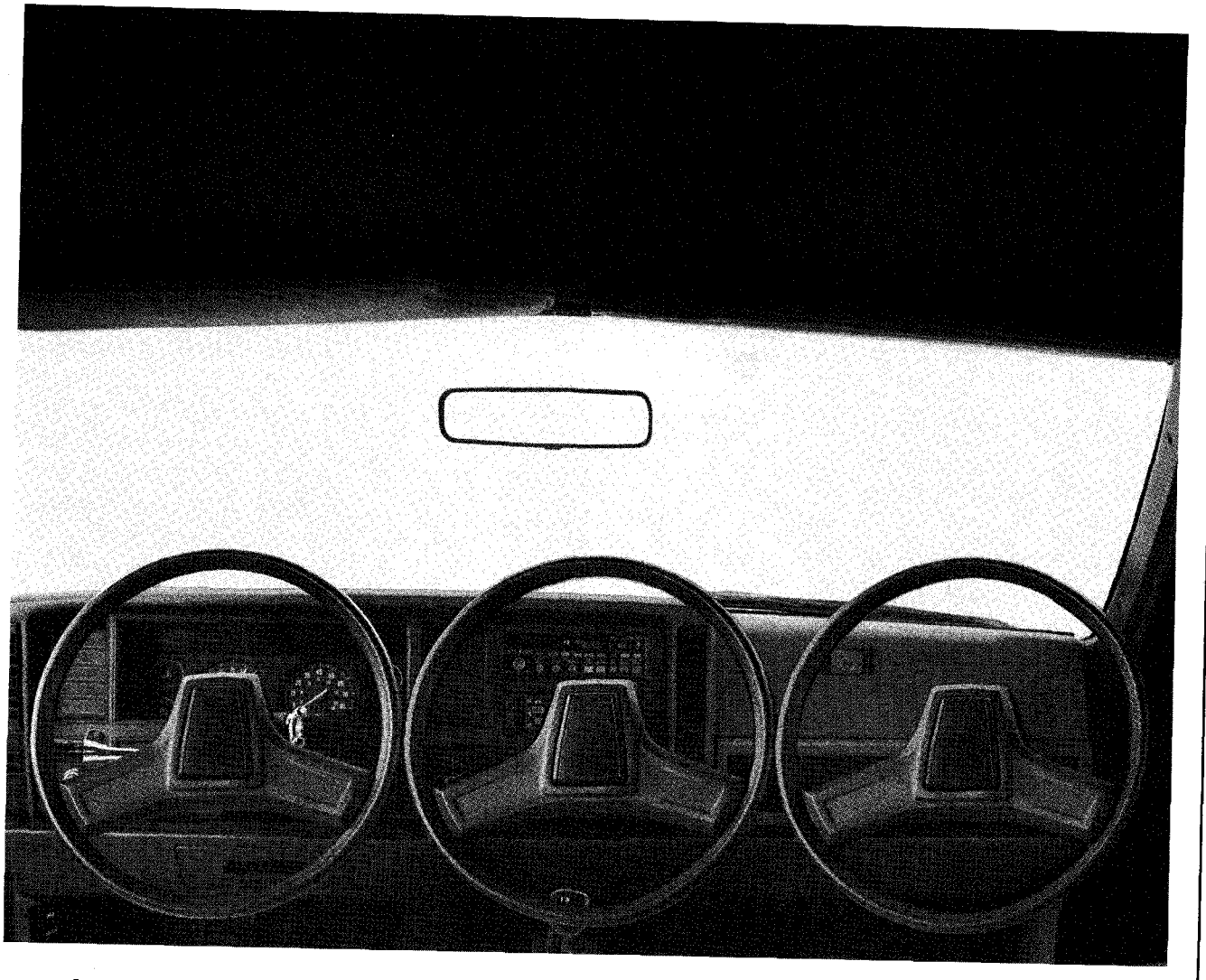

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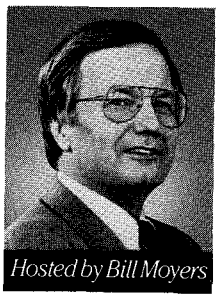

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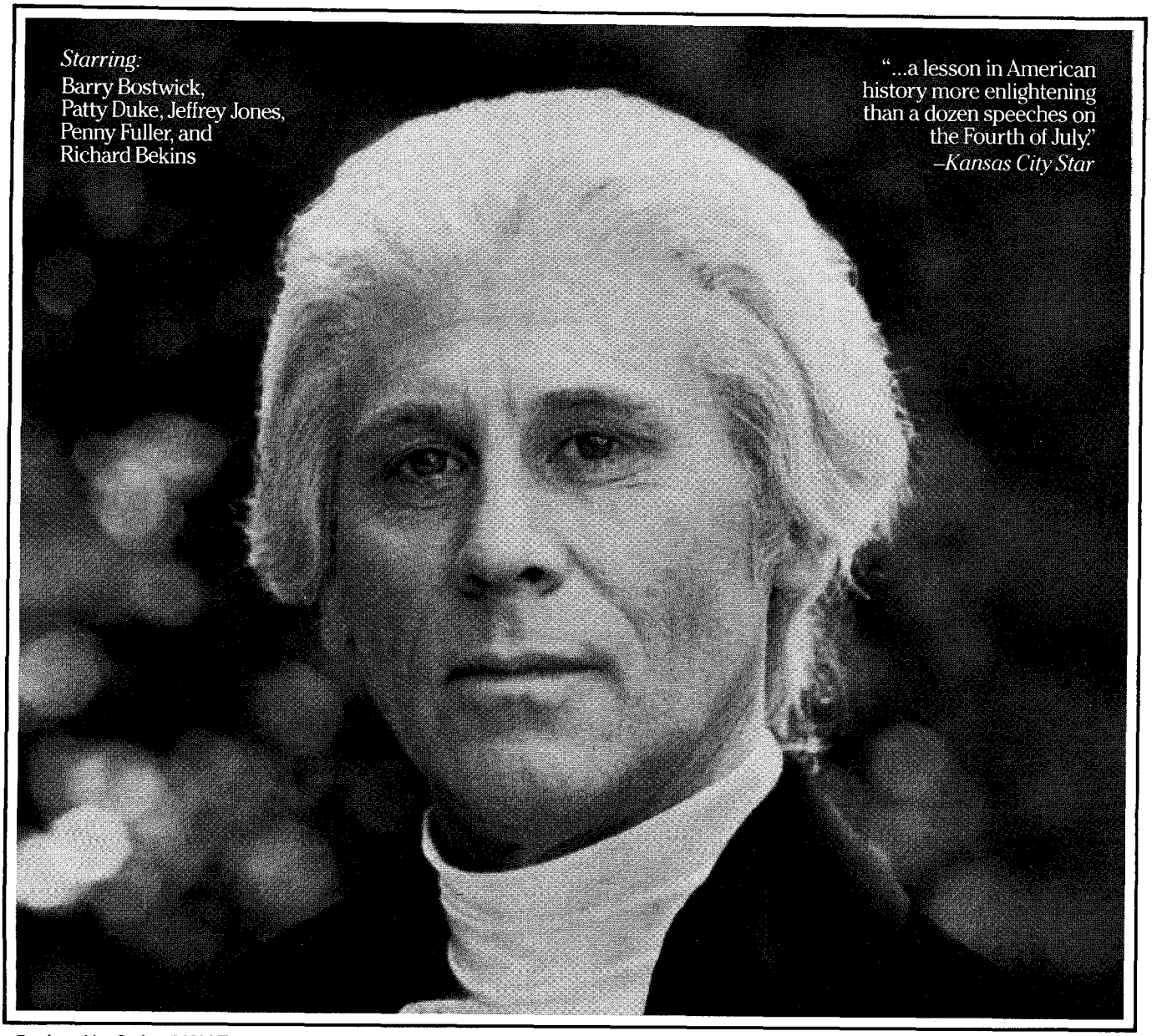
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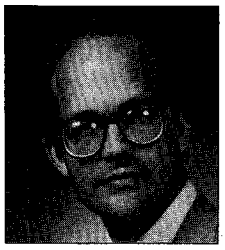
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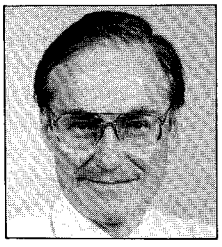
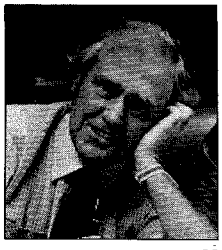

BARTLEY 30


HART 39

O'SULLIVAN 40

INSIDE THE SUPREME COURT

24 While Justice Sleeps
It's pretty easy being a Supreme Court Justice these days; while your clerks do the humdrum work of interpreting the Constitution, you can nap, watch TV, or criticize the President for not doing his job.
Terry Eastland

ARTICLES & COLUMNS

20 On the Scene
The national media have been portraying the Chicago mayoral campaign as a racial battle; not so, reports **John R. Coyne Jr.** . . . **Steve Marlin** notes, meanwhile, that in the Windy City art must serve the People —but not necessarily the country. . . . **William McGurn** wonders why Margaret Thatcher is planning to impose Communist rule on Hong Kong years before the Chinese take over.

30 How Reaganomics Made the World Work
An inside account of the Reagan boom—how the intellectual groundwork was laid and why the boom survived the 1982 recession and the 1987 crash. *Robert L. Bartley*

35 The Wright Stuff
The road to the S&L crisis was paved with donations to Democratic campaigns. House Speaker Jim Wright is now before a jury of his peers—other congressmen who took S&L campaign money.
R. Cort Kirkwood & Terence P. Jeffrey

37 Afghan Sitzkrieg
The outlines of the postwar settlement are visible—and it's one both superpowers can live with. *Radek Sikorski*

39 Profscam
The key to academic promotion: never mind the quality, weigh the thesis. *Jeffrey Hart*

BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

40 Alistair Horne has painted a fine portrait of the early Harold Macmillan, says **John O'Sullivan**, explaining both his Edwardian shell and his thoroughly modern ruthlessness. . . . **Andrew Ferguson** finds in *From: The President: Richard Nixon's Secret Files* answers to the questions: How weird *was* Richard Nixon? and, Who helped make him that way? . . . Intrepid polemicist Paul Johnson has missed the mark with *Intellectuals*, sighs **Joseph Sobran**: Johnson convinces us that various geniuses of the Left were rotten people, but fails to show how that reflects on their beliefs. . . . With *Partial Payments*, Joseph Epstein strikes another powerful and pleasant blow for the reconstruction of our literary culture. Two and a half cheers from **Carol Iannone**. . . . **Aram Bakshian Jr.** judges Chekhov the best of the sad, mad Russians, and V. S. Pritchett a fine biographer for understanding him primarily through his works. . . . **John Ardoin** traces the Mozart revival, with kudos to Sir Thomas Beecham, and prepares us for the bicentennial of the composer's death. . . . Want to make it into "Talk of the Town"? **Nika Hazelton** has a way.

4 LETTERS
9 FOR THE RECORD
10 THE WEEK
28 help
48 THE RIGHT BOOKS
54 ON THE RIGHT
56 TRANS-O-GRAM

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LETTERS

Abortion, Morality, & the Law

You can't blame pro-lifers for being passionate about their cause, and yet, for someone who is on their side but with reservations, the temptation is to stop your ears against the shouting.

In this context, Richard John Neuhaus's "After *Roe*" [April 7] was like a breath of fresh air—or, better, a dash of cold water. Some pro-lifers, he says, "contend that the pro-life movement should, state by state, go for broke. . . . By going for broke, however, they could wind up seeing the remarkable pro-life achievement of the last 16 years broken." "Of course every abortion is a tragedy," he writes, "but more than a million fewer tragedies each year is a monumental change for the better." He applies the scalpel to George Will's well-meaning but equivocal attempt to recast the questions posed by *Roe*'s arbitrary time-line; but he also reminds us (on the question of whether saving the mother's life is grounds for abortion) that "no law can properly require heroic virtue. . . . Saints are produced by religious inspiration, not by edict of the state."

There is probably not a new argument in this essay; but then, there are no new laws in Blackstone, of which, in its breadth of vision and weight of authority, Pastor Neuhaus's piece reminded me.

Gervase Thomson
Belmont, Mass.

Giving Privacy a Bad Name

Without getting involved in the esoterica of "original intent," or confusing NATIONAL REVIEW with the *Journal of American History*, I would like to make a brief comment on the exchange between Harry Jaffa and Joe Sobran ["A Right to Privacy?" March 24].

First, I agree with Jaffa that the Founders took natural rights for granted in their Lockean form: "Life, Liberty, and Estate." To Locke, life was essential and with it went both "incorporeal" and "corporeal" hereditaments, that is, both invisible (for example, "the Pursuit of Happiness"—see his chapter on "Power" in the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*) and tangible estate, a package to which he gave the generic name "Property." Privacy, properly defined, could surely be a component of the pursuit of happiness.

Second, as Jaffa's friend Thomas Jefferson demonstrated in the Declaration of Independence, the right to define the components of Locke's generic property resided in the community. In 1776 the American community took as "self-evident" the rights to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" and left it to the people through their legislative bodies to provide the legal footnotes, e.g., criminal laws, zoning codes, etc. A man's house may have been his castle, but its status as a zone of privacy vanished if he engaged in illegal behavior therein, e.g., incest, sodomy, wife-beating . . . The list is immense.

Third, Madison, when he cobbled together the Bill of Rights—which he thought supererogatory—was aiming to appease the states'-rights constituency by limiting the power of the Federal Government. I suspect he considered both the Ninth and Tenth Amendments to be trumpet flourishes on a theme he considered self-evident, namely that the new government could not exercise powers it didn't have. However, this hypothesis is neither provable nor disprovable: there is no direct evidence of intent. I found Justice Goldberg's opinion in *Griswold* interesting speculation, but not persuasive, and Leonard Levy's exposition has not altered my view.

In short, I think a right of privacy—limited, as Jaffa rightly says—could be extrapolated from the due-process clauses of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments in consonance with the Lockean tradition: liberty was far more than the right to move around. But the Court's shenanigans in *Griswold* and *Roe* contributed only to giving privacy a bad name.

John P. Roche
Weston, Mass.

Sorry—Wrong Number

In "How Big Business Bankrolls the Left" [March 10], I wrote that "During 1985, Exxon gave $125,000 to the Urban Institute and $130,000 to the American Enterprise Institute" but that "in 1986, the amounts were less balanced: $75,000 for the Urban Institute and only $10,000 to AEI." While the amounts were indeed less balanced, the imbalance actually was very much in AEI's favor: $225,000 instead of the $10,000 I said.

Our book, *Patterns of Corporate Philanthropy: Public Affairs Giving and the Forbes 250*, includes only the correct

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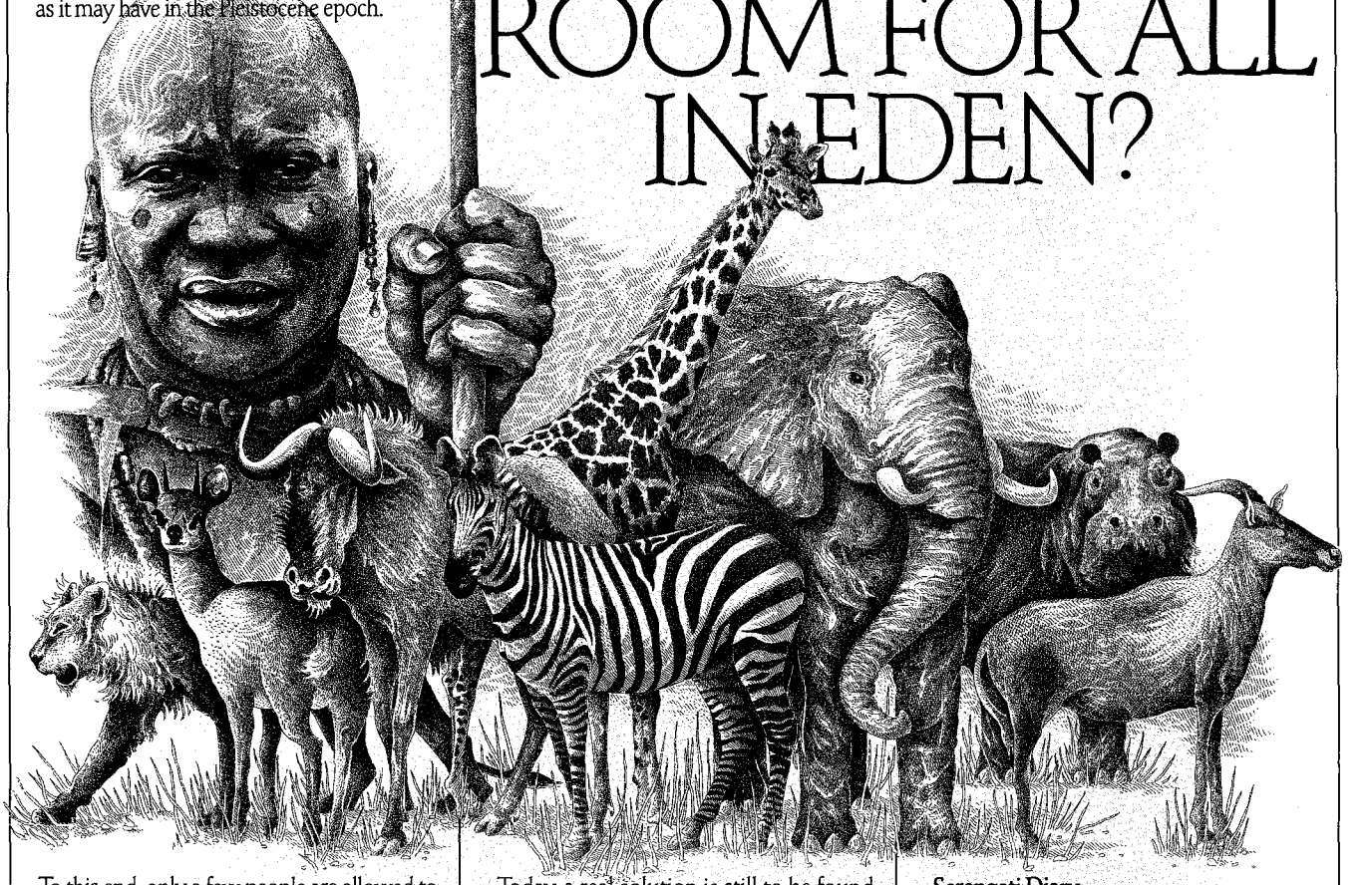
WILL THERE BE ROOM FOR ALL IN EDEN?

SITUATED ON A VAST PLAIN IN TANZANIA, atop a broad plateau, is a 5,700-square-mile national park. Within roam some two million large plains animals. It has been called, "an African Eden."

The Masai people of Tanzania named it "siringet"—meaning "an extended place." We know it as Serengeti, one of the greatest environmental spectacles on earth. But all is not perfect in paradise.

Wildlife or People?

The United Republic of Tanzania earnestly wants to preserve this park, which looks much as it may have in the Pleistocene epoch.



To this end, only a few people are allowed to live there.

But each year, a growing population, often plagued by poverty and hunger, crowds the park borders.

On one side, seminomadic herdsmen and their livestock push in—creating the problems of overgrazing and a strain on water resources.

On another boundary, the contrast between a park teeming with animals and poor, hungry families living on its fringes has inevitably led to illegal poaching.

The African Paradox.

Torn between the demands for grazing land and food—and the needs of the wildlife—Tanzania seeks a balance. Thirty years ago, in the face of intense pressure from pastoral Masai, it established a large multi-use-land area where some farming and grazing by local inhabitants were allowed. But the central plain was reserved for wild animals.

Today, a real solution is still to be found. Tanzania has come to a crossroads. It wants the world to understand that the park should be dedicated to the preservation of the animals and their habitat. But its equal goal is improved and more civilized conditions for the people of the region. The answer is not one or the other. Both have the right to existence. Both must be considered.

The Search for Balance.

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Watch "Serengeti Diary," a new National Geographic Special on Public Television. It's produced by the National Geographic Society and WQED/Pittsburgh and underwritten by the people of Chevron. Tune in on Wednesday, April 12th. Check your local listings for show times on PBS.

Share the Serengeti with those who love and care for it. Experience their emotional attachment to this African Eden.

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amounts. The error in the article is mine—although, unfortunately, correcting it does nothing to alter Exxon's status as a textbook example of "schizoid" corporate public-affairs giving.

William T. Poole
Capital Research Center
Washington, D.C.

Once a Liberal

Jeane Kirkpatrick's "Advice to the President" [Feb. 10] demonstrates that she remains a Hubert Humphrey Democrat. All her prescriptions are of the big-government variety: increased spending, more centralized authority, and protectionism. Mrs. Kirkpatrick may not be a blame-America-firster, but she still thinks problems are solved with federal money. I hope conservatives who have been touting her as a presidential candidate worthy of our support will pay heed.

Harry Robinson
Arlington, Tex.

Refighting Vietnam

There's a thesis resident, I'm sure, in the fight Peter Brimelow has with establishment media at the outset of his review of *A Bright Shining Lie* ["Books, Arts & Manners," March 10]. But please, the *Monitor* doesn't have a dog in that fight. If all reviews of Neil Sheehan's work, save Mr. Brimelow's, are positive, something's afoot, and maybe the answer lies in his deconstructionist approach.

Be so kind as to look at the opening paragraph of the *Monitor*'s review, especially the sentence where Jeff Danziger states, "The mere facts of the Vietnam War can be structured in a book to prove nearly anything." Or, further on, "As a history, *A Bright Shining Lie* is not as expository or as clear as Stanley Karnow's *Vietnam: A History*, or James William Gibson's *The Perfect War* (which in my opinion is the best text), but as reading material it is unparalleled." The *Monitor*'s reviewer was fully aware of the scope, and therefore the limits, of Sheehan's work.

If Danziger found Sheehan's nexus—the fight within the heart of Paul Vann and, by proxy, America itself—compelling, "a milestone in the literature about the war," certainly he has not misread the book by singling this out. The focus is different from that of Mr. Brimelow, who suggests that Sheehan laid claim to writing the Great American History of the Vietnam War, and then didn't. Sheehan made no such claim.

Mr. Brimelow's analogy to Gordon as the Victorian Vann is an apt one. But awarding Danziger the "Thundering Inanity Prize" for suggesting that Vann was someone who "thought there were problems that could be solved by killing," misses the point about the changes that occurred in Vann's own thinking about how to win the war. He quickly came to see body counts were but part of the answer. It is not sermonizing to say Vann came to realize, as Sheehan documents, it was as important to have an indigenous force with the will, the wits, and means on the ground to drive out the invader as it was to wishfully kill the invader from the sky.

Perhaps the generation "whose youth" the Vietnam War "pervaded" will take the "struggle" to their graves, as Mr. Brimelow states, and even beyond. Let us hope that once there, as they go over the facts, they realize the fight is over.

Jim Bencivenga
Book Editor
Christian Science Monitor
Boston, Mass.

Mr. Brimelow Replies

I knew you weren't supposed to criticize liberal books, but I hadn't realized that

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you weren't supposed to criticize liberal critics either. Is this the Bencivenga Doctrine?

Mr. Bencivenga has also kindly provided us with his interpretation of the impenetrable constructivism/deconstructivism debate. Apparently, he thinks it is possible for "mere facts" to be "structured" to "prove anything"—exactly like a liberal Supreme Court Justice. This liberates Mr. Bencivenga to assert a) that I accuse Neil Sheehan of attempting a history of Vietnam (actually that claim was made by the *New York Times*); and b) that John Paul Vann came to see that massive air power was not enough in Vietnam. Actually Vann *began* by opposing air power and *ended*—once the war became conventional—as an ardent enthusiast. I certainly don't expect Mr. Bencivenga to read Sheehan's awful book. But this point was equally clear in his own reviewer's awful review.

Peter Brimelow
New York, N.Y.

Grounding SDI

Your "SDI Watch: Do We Really Need a Space-Based Defense?" ["The Week," Feb. 10] made the case for deploying a space-based system in the 1990s. But given present congressional resistance it seems unlikely that such a system could be approved and funded.

Fortunately, there is a way of getting a strategic ballistic-missile defense that has much better political prospects. It is described in the book *The Business of Science*, by Simon Ramo, a leading defense expert and an advisor to the SDI program. Ramo would have the two superpowers sign a two-stage agreement. In the first stage, the two countries would cut missiles down to the minimum needed to deter attack (say 10 per cent of present levels). The second stage would be for each side to build a small, ground-based ABM system that would be large enough to intercept the limited number of warheads that would be left, including ones that might be hidden.

Such a modest, ground-based system would be far less expensive than one based in space, and there would be more assurance of technological feasibility; furthermore, since both sides would be defended against attack, the arrangement would probably be quite stable.

Les Brunswick
Pittsburgh, Pa.

A reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the superpowers to 10 per cent of their present levels would make a safer world, but it is not the world we live in. Right now, as we noted in "SDI Watch," the U.S. is confronted with a Soviet ICBM arsenal enlarged far beyond the needs of deterrence, and capable of executing a decapitating strike against our vulnerable military command network, thus preventing effective U.S. retaliation.

The first order of business for the United States is to prevent such an attack. In "SDI Watch," we explained how a combination of space and ground defenses can do this, and why ground-based defenses alone cannot.

As soon as our potentially catastrophic vulnerability has been remedied, the U.S. could move forward on the plan outlined by Mr. Brunswick for drastic reductions in nuclear arsenals. But to move in that direction before we have a defense in place to protect our dwindling deterrent would be a prescription for disaster.

As to the political feasibility of deploying defenses in space, that's the job of the Bush Administration and its allies in Congress. Leaving the U.S. command network vulnerable to an incapacitating Soviet attack would be an act of sheer irresponsibility. —ED.

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FOR THE RECORD

Reverberations from **Newt Gingrich**'s election as Minority Whip in the House continue to shake the Capitol. Democrats are undone. Says **David Obey** (D., Wis.): "Newt Gingrich is to the American political system what **Frank Lorenzo** is to Eastern Airlines." . . . *Washington Post* quotes an unnamed Democratic aide on Gingrich. "[He is] the political equivalent of a computer virus." . . . "The prospect of Mr. Gingrich as Minority Whip does not gladden the hearts of Democrats," commented the *New York Times* in its preliminary news story. . . . Political analyst **Kevin Phillips** describes Gingrich as "a longtime maverick, agitator, and quasi-pariah, a political provocateur." . . . Less talented polemicists tend to call him a "firebrand." . . . Speaker **Jim Wright** would like "to abate this harsh, angry, really hateful degree of partisanship." . . . Most Republicans in House were delighted. "I've long since thought that we need a little more emphasis on the word 'opposition' and a little less emphasis on the word 'loyal' "—**Dick Armey** (Tex.). . . . Rep. **Lynn Martin** (Ill.): "We accommodated ourselves for a number of years and we've ended up with fewer seats. Let's try something else." . . . A thumbnail sketch in the always temperate *Christian Science Monitor* found Gingrich a forceful debater "whose sentences pour out rounded, parsed, suitable for framing." . . . Back in Georgia, **Dave Worley**, who was whupped by Gingrich 59 to 41 per cent last November, reportedly is gearing up for a rematch next year.

GOP lost its second House seat since November (the first was lost when **Richard Cheney** moved to Defense) with surprise victory of Democrat **Jill Long** over Republican **Dan Heath** in Indiana. The special election was called after Representative **Dan Coats** was named to fill **Dan Quayle**'s Senate seat. . . . Rep. Lynn Martin is more than interested in Sen. **Paul Simon**'s seat, says *Chicago Sun-Times*. She's set up an exploratory committee. . . . There's a possibility of a Republican pickup in Connecticut, where Democratic Gov. **William O'Neill**'s approval rating is down to 33 per cent (fiscal problems, new taxes). . . . Now that young **Joe Kennedy** has taken himself out of gubernatorial race in Massachusetts, former Democratic National Chairman **Paul Kirk** could be interested in a run for it. . . . *Human Events* says **Jamie Bush**, the President's nephew (son of **Prescott**), may take on Rep. **Gerry Studds** (D., Mass.) next year.

Shailo, *Daily Telegraph*, London / Rothco

"Just tell me again, Senator, why you voted against John Tower."

Glasnost, sort of: Last month Soviet jammers were back at work blocking a **Radio Liberty** report on pro-democracy demonstrations in Moscow. . . . **Voice of America** Director **Richard Carlson** says **Radio Martí**, which broadcasts to Cuba, is now on the air 24 hours a day. . . . Contra leader **Adolfo Calero** is as doubtful as he has always been of Sandinista assurances of free and democratic elections. To base an accord on **Daniel Ortega**'s promises, he says, is like "trying to leash a dog with sausages." . . . No huge outcry on massacre of 37 villagers by Peru's Shining Path guerrillas last month. The rebels cut the men's throats, and shot a pregnant woman who tried to flee. . . . *L'Express* reports that, since 1985, 1,464 members of Colombia's anti-narcotics squad have been killed; that's more than one out of every ten drug-enforcement officers. . . . Which brings to mind recent one-liner by Washington Mayor **Marion Barry**: "Outside of the killings, we have one of the lowest crime rates in the country."

Developments Left & Right: Former *NR* Publisher **William A. Rusher**, who moves to San Francisco in August, will become a Senior Fellow at Claremont Institute, direct a series of seminars there, and do some writing for them. . . . Rusher's former co-conspirator (in the 1964 nomination of **Barry Goldwater**), **F. Clifton White**, will host dinner May 4 at Chicago's Hyatt Regency Downtown to celebrate 25th anniversary of Barry's nomination and his eightieth birthday. For info write **Michael Ross**, United Republican Fund, 320 N. Michigan, Chicago, Ill. 60601. . . . Three-year-old Boston Conservative Society, founded to provide public forum for conservatives in benighted Massachusetts, meets on third Thursday of the month in Cambridge. For info: Dr. **John Strang**, BCS, P.O. Box 1870, Boston, Mass. 02205-1870. . . . At embattled Dartmouth, **Wilcomb Washburn**, '48, is running as an independent for board of trustees. Washburn needed 250 signatures, received three thousand. Election later this month. . . . Washington bracing for April 9 mass demonstration of pro-abortion forces intended to sway Supreme Court in its review of *Roe* v. *Wade*. March is organized by National Abortion Rights Action League, which also plans to spend $2 million on pro-*Roe* TV programs. . . . *Washington Post Book World* chose **Jessica Mitford**, the Communist Mitford sister, to review two new books on **Maclean** and **Philby**. Miss Mitford hated **Robert Cecil**'s critical appraisal of Maclean, loved **Philip Knightley**'s sympathetic look at Philby. She ended with comment on Philby by **Robert Mackenzie**: "Philby didn't *sell* his country's secrets. He gave them away. He didn't do it for money. He never got a penny. He did it for his ideals."

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THE WEEK

☐ A post-victory sketch of Mikhail Gorbachev, landslide winner of the Soviet elections: ". . . a young man, and at once a progressive and a despot, as often happens with Russians" (*Fathers and Sons*, Ivan Turgenev, 1862).

☐ The chart in the papers said it all: In 1979, the year of Three Mile Island, there were 72 nuclear power plants operating in this country, 95 under construction, 25 on order. Ten years later, 111 are operating, but only 12 are under construction (and only four of these have firm operating dates); all of two are on order. There are no charts showing the cancer deaths caused by the coal power that took up the slack, or America's continuing reliance on a potentially OPEC-driven oil market. No charts, most grievously, measuring the output of misleading and hysterical journalism (A-CLOUD MOVES CLOSER), more damaging than any radiation release. New developments in fusion may make fission reactors a moot issue sooner than anyone had expected. But the economic and technological loss caused by our ten-year-panic can never be recovered, only made up at a later time.

☐ Fifty lawyers in the Justice Department—career civil-service employees—have signed a petition to protest Attorney General Richard Thornburgh's challenge to legal abortion in the case of *Webster* v. *Reproductive Health Services*. "We believe that every woman has the right to make her own decision about whether or not to continue her pregnancy, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in *Roe* v. *Wade*," the petition said. "We oppose any government interference with this basic right." An anonymous spokesman for the group, who was breaking department rules by speaking to the press, accused Thornburgh of pursuing "the political agenda of the Far Right," by which he apparently meant those who passed the laws of all fifty states before *Roe* and elected George Bush last year. In other words, Thornburgh has subordinates who want either to make policy, or to sabotage it. We recall Churchill's warning about civil servants —"no longer civil, and no longer servants."

☐ Very large questions now loom about the structure of the U.S. armed forces. Budget-cutting is one impetus, but these questions would have become urgent even without it. Our need is to link weapons procurement and order of battle with a hierarchy of likely missions for the military. It is notable that when we sent our ships to the Persian Gulf, the U.S. Navy had two mine-sweepers, one in drydock, and our most sophisticated equipment was vulnerable to military junk. Mission probability necessarily changes as the equation of power in the world changes. Some missions become more probable than they were ten years ago, others less so. The procurement of various weapons systems should not be left to trade-offs among the services. Procurement also should not be based on the fact that a weapon is manufactured in a given congressional district. Secretary Cheney has a tough job ahead of him.

☐ Congress, with its bill to increase the minimum wage, is busy destroying hundreds of thousands of jobs. The blow will fall hardest on those who can least afford it, including many retarded people and minority youngsters. The indirect results will include increased homelessness, street crime, drug abuse, and congressional crowing about helping the country by helping its workers. Veto it.

☐ Last month, the *New York Times* ran a pair of stories alleging torture and accusations of witchcraft in UNITA-occupied Angola. The *Times* cited, as a major source, Fred Bridgland, author of *Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa* (see "Books in Brief," *NR*, October 23, 1987). Bridgland, an English journalist, has now written to the editors of the *Times* complaining that they "wildly overstepped the bounds of journalistic ethics." Bridgland says he refused to speak to the *Times* on the record "because I believe reporting of the Angolan crisis in your paper has been consistently skewed." He talked off the record, after much pleading, and then found himself quoted—and misquoted. "Statements and convictions [have been] attributed to me which I have simply not subscribed to. Most of them are fabrications." It's a good thing Bridgland wasn't treated in this shabby manner by a UNITA newspaper, or the *Times* could have accused it of perverting freedom of the press as well.

☐ Back in 1984, the Reagan Administration poured millions into the election campaign of José Napoleón

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Duarte, the Christian Democratic candidate in El Salvador. The theory was that to thwart the Communists, we should support a democratic-socialist alternative. But Duarte's administration has been a disaster. Socialist land-redistribution (encouraged, to be sure, by U.S. advisors) created a food shortage. U.S. aid seems principally to have benefited the upper echelons of the Christian Democratic Party. So last month, the Salvadoran electorate, in an internationally monitored election, threw the Christian Democrats out, and voted in ARENA. This "right-wing" party (formerly led by Roberto d'Aubuisson) won in the teeth of U.S. disapproval, and Washington is talking darkly about cutting off aid. Do the U.S. Congress and media believe in democracy? The voters of El Salvador have spoken, in an election considered unusually fair for that region of the world. But ARENA made the mistake of defeating a socialist regime, and will not be forgiven by "world opinion," which wants to see this hubris punished by defeat at the hands of the Communist guerrillas (even if that would promptly put a stop to Salvadoran exercise of world opinion's other shibboleth, democracy). Remember this while watching the treatment of El Salvador on your nightly "news."

☐ As a wild melee of Afghan horsemen jockeys for position, the camera freezes on the open mouth of a rearing horse, and the voiceover intones: "In 1953, Soviet tanks rolled into East Germany, crushing the German rebellion in 11 days." More galloping and neighing; then: "In 1956, Soviet troops wiped out the Hungarian uprising in less than three weeks. . . . In 1968, Soviet tanks crushed the Czechoslovakian reform movement in one day. . . . In Afghanistan, the Soviet troops have fought the longest war in their country's history and could not win it. Why?" We are watching an extraordinary five-part television series, *The Soviets at the Crossroads*, which will start airing this month on various PBS affiliates. The Canadian filmmakers, Stornoway Productions, examine four corners of the Third World where the Soviets have wreaked havoc: Ethiopia, Cuba, Angola, and Afghanistan. If this sounds like unusual fare for PBS, be warned that *The Soviets at the Crossroads* is not a "right-wing" production. In the Cuban segment, for example, we watch a journalist named Margaret Kemper discoursing on those "big, powerful, charismatic, magnetic men," Fidel and Raúl Castro. Mrs. Kemper turns out to be the former Margaret Trudeau, and she hasn't changed a bit. But wait for another woman's voice, this one belonging to Millicent Fenwick, formerly establishment-Republican senator from New Jersey, more recently ambassador to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization: "There's no hiding place in Ethiopia any more. The state is everywhere. . . . If we really care about these people, if we *really* care . . . we cannot continue to fuel a system that is bent on oppressing them."

☐ After years of legal and bureaucratic struggle, sculptor Richard Serra's *The Tilted Arc* has been removed from the plaza in front of the Federal Building in downtown Manhattan. The cultural elite was aghast. The work consists of a 12-foot-tall curving and inclined wall of rusting steel. In its years there, it raised serious questions about the role of avant-garde art in public spaces. A rule might be that to be accepted publicly, an avant-garde work must express something public. Certainly the Trylon and Perisphere did during the 1939-1940 World's Fair, and the public loved it. After initial controversy, the Vietnam War memorial has been adored by the public. Richard Serra has been yelling free speech, but anyone who wants *The Tilted Arc* can surely buy it. William J. Diamond, regional director of the General Services Administration, struggled for years to remove it, and finally succeeded. He was right. Public space has public uses, which include art, but not art the public loathes.

☐ We are sorry to report that a gentleman died while prospecting for gold out West. A friend took his remains home for burial in New York, driving night and day cross-country. Oops. The friend was arrested. It seems you have to have a permit to transport a body across state lines.

☐ Meat, fish, eggs, dairy products, corn, potatoes, vegetables, coffee, tea, wine, and almost everything else once considered healthy and tasty, along with a good deal considered unhealthy and tasty, have all been the subject of previous government-abetted health scares in recent years. Now even an apple a day means the doctor gets pay. Do not despair. You can always nibble bark. Or stop listening to government health reports.

☐ SAT Question: Mikhail Gorbachev is *least* likely to a) rejuvenate the Soviet economy; b) defect and become director of the Hoover Institution; c) invade Argentina; d) play wide receiver for the Chicago Bears. (Choose only one.)

Way, *Punch* / Rothco

"Mr. Stalin is no longer with us."

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The Limits of Bipartisanship

THE RECENT DEAL over Contra aid between the Secretary of State, James Baker, and the leaders of both Houses of Congress will allow the Administration to keep the Contras alive as a potential fighting force until next February, when, under the terms of the Central American regional agreement, the Sandinistas are supposed to hold democratic elections. The Administration's underlying calculation seems to be that a force actually in existence in Honduran camps constitutes a greater incentive for the Sandinistas to live up to their promises than would a threat, lacking in credibility, to recruit a new Contra army. To judge from Managua's hostile reaction, the Sandinistas have made the same calculation. It is therefore on balance a modest gain—probably the best deal that could be extracted from a liberal Congress dominated by a Democratic Party viscerally antagonistic to the Nicaraguan resistance.

But that gain is strictly temporary. Ask a few questions: Will Congress vote for a renewal of *military* aid to the Contras if the Sandinistas renege? or if they win an election by blatant intimidation and ballot-rigging? Indeed, can one imagine any circumstances, short of a direct Nicaraguan invasion of Texas, in which the present Congress would vote for a resumption of military aid at all? The answer, surely, is no. If the Sandinistas were to renege on their pledges of "pluralism" in the most public and unambiguous manner, Congress would at best extend the kind of humanitarian funding that currently keeps the Contras playing volleyball in Honduras. The most that could be claimed for Mr. Baker's deal, then, is that maintaining the Contras until next February may introduce a very slight element of uncertainty into Sandinista calculations. But that is all.

Examine, now, the other side of the ledger. In order to obtain congressional consent, Mr. Baker has agreed to make any extension of funding after November dependent upon the endorsement of four congressional committees. This raises specific practical and political questions. What happens, for instance, if three committees endorse funding and one opposes it? No one seems to know. And how large a voice will the Honorable George W. Crockett Jr., chairman of the House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs (which constitutes almost a third of the parent Foreign Affairs Committee), enjoy in these matters? It would be a curious triumph of bipartisanship if one of Congress's more prominent fellow-travelers had a major say in determining Administration policy toward the only Communist government on the American mainland.

But these are niceties compared to the undermining of presidential authority in foreign policy which Mr. Baker's negotiations confirm and even raise to the level of constitutional convention. President Reagan allowed some erosion of that authority in practice by failing, for instance, to contest the constitutionality of the Boland Amendments. He thus left a weakened and narrowed authority to Mr. Bush. But he never conceded the principle of congressional control, which meant that later Presidents could still fight to regain the ground lost. By accepting a covert legislative veto under the guise of a "gentlemen's agreement," President Bush has given up that ground for good. He has, in effect, renounced a portion of presidential authority.

Does it matter? Conservatives legitimately disagree on the "imperial Presidency." But the case for presidential power is strongest in foreign policy, where decisions must be quick, discreet, and informed by a genuinely national outlook. The present "rotten borough" Congress, itself aggressively imperial, fails all of these tests. It is by nature long-winded and leak-prone, by recent development attentive to narrow constituency concerns to the detriment of any broader national interest. It is precisely what Burke warned the electors of Bristol against—"a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests." In these circumstances, strong presidential authority in foreign affairs is no mere partisan cause.

Neither Mr. Bush nor Mr. Baker acted lightly. They bargained from a weak position to obtain a real but modest benefit in keeping the Contras alive. But that game is not worth the candle of a permanent loss of presidential authority. Nor will they be able to hold Congress to account if, as is all too likely, it finds excuses to sabotage the Contras anyway. For that would mean abandoning the commitment to bipartisanship that made the deal necessary in the first place. And that will not be done until it becomes unmistakably clear that bipartisanship in foreign policy means shared weakness and joint hesitation.

On the Point

NEWT GINGRICH'S campaign for Minority Whip, which had the endorsement of *NR* ("The Week," April 7), succeeded by the slimmest of margins. Nevertheless it represented a significant rebuke, by House Republicans, to the Old Guard leadership that for years has done so little for so few.

It came as no surprise, then, that the journalistic world, which is ideologically in tune with the status quo, opened up on Gingrich immediately—indeed, quicker than immediately. Two days before the GOP representatives voted, the *Washington Post* front-paged a story alleging that Gingrich's last book, *The Window of Opportunity*, was published under dubious circumstances. Since two of the charges against Speaker Jim Wright [see also "Quis Custodiet?" p. 35], to whom Gingrich stands in the relation of a vulture to the liver of Prometheus, are that Wright's "book,"

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Reflections of a Public Man, a pastiche of speeches and yarns with lots of white space, was assembled by staff on taxpayer time, and that the outlandish royalties Wright collected—55 per cent—were, in effect, a form of campaign contribution, the *Post* story was a transparent attempt to establish moral equivalence: Speaker Wright may be a rogue, but so is his nemesis.

Then, two days after Gingrich's victory, the *Wall Street Journal* gave its news columns over to a listing of Gingrich friends and associates who were supposed to have profited from their relationship with him in a variety of unseemly ways.

Both stories were wobbly work. A partnership of Gingrich supporters raised over $100,000 to promote *The Window of Opportunity*—an unusual arrangement for a book, but standard for Broadway shows. Gingrich's royalty, though, was a slim 3 per cent; his book, which he wrote himself, was a real book, published by a real house (St. Martin's). The *Wall Street Journal*'s story was even more of a wild goose chase. One Gingrich supporter in Georgia, for instance, was said to have received a $200,000 grant from HUD to manage old people's housing. The grant was approved, though, in September 1978—a month before Gingrich's first election victory. Gingrich's buddy subsequently withdrew his request, and never received the grant. Some corruption. Maybe they need out-of-state consultants—say, from Texas.

By winning the Whip slot, Gingrich has become a point man. The muck goes with the job. He knew that going in. He is superbly qualified to take it—and to pass it on to his enemies, where it deserves to stick.

Pumping Out the S&Ls

As government pumps make a splash at the spout,
A hole in the bow keeps flotation in doubt,
While tellers *ker-choo!* in their watery shoes
That suck at their socks like primordial ooze.
Though President Bush has provided a raft,
Depositors seem to be slithering aft,
Where, with the rates rising along with the tide,
It's possible some will go over the side.

W. H. von Dreele

Comrade Gorbachev's Leap in the Dark

The peoples of the Soviet Union have voted—after a fashion. The March 26 election for the Congress of People's Deputies was hardly the free multiple-choice sort of election we are used to in the West. But it offered more open debate, and more choice of candidates, than the Soviet peoples have enjoyed at any other time since 1918.

The estimated turnout was relatively high—over 80 per cent—suggesting that people took this innovation seriously. And the results, so far as they have been reported, represent a small earthquake. Boris Yeltsin, ostensibly standing for rapid and far-reaching reform, carried Moscow in a landslide against an official Party man. Some official candidates running unopposed have *lost*, a majority crossing out the candidate's name. (The Party candidate loses to Mr. Magooski.) To the extent that they could, the voters said, No. The fact that the official Soviet media have yet to report some of the more embarrassing Party defeats suggests that this experiment in democracy became more democratic than Mr. Gorbachev intended.

In short, the election, the Congress, and the new 422-seat Supreme Soviet, approximating to a real parliament (of sorts), that it will nominate were not part of any long-considered strategy by Mr. Gorbachev. They were a short-term tactical response, hastily adopted when he failed to win a majority of delegates to the 19th Special Party Conference he called last June. Mr. Gorbachev is now attempting to establish the new-look Supreme Soviet as the central decision-making body of the state. But this must be seen as, at best, a leap in the dark.

Remarkable though anything resembling real elections and genuine debate is in the Soviet Union, the events weaken and confuse traditional Communist Party structure. What makes matters worse is that, as the economic crisis continues to worsen, more freedom will be associated with less food. The Soviet Union's agricultural prospects are as gloomy as ever. At the Central Committee meeting in March, Mr. Gorbachev scrapped *Gosagroprom*—the giant, Stalinesque superministry he created three years ago to oversee agricultural production. The Central Committee, with much grumbling, finally adopted a plan to lease land to the peasants for fifty-year terms. This is private property restored under a fig leaf.

The reform is better late than never, but it faces prodigious obstacles. Gorbachev gave the Party's regional bureaucracy the authority to decide which collective farms would be de-collectivized and which would not. This puts the power to implement land reform into the hands of its bitterest enemies.

Leading Soviet watchers note other problems. Judy Shelton of the Hoover Institution, author of *The Coming Soviet Crash*, points to a recent all-Union poll in which 45 per cent of Soviet peasants opposed decollectivization and only 5 per cent supported it. Half a century of hostile propaganda encouraging envy at the expense of initiative and success has done its work. The spirit of enterprise and individual economic responsibility will not be revived in five months.

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Leon Aron of the Heritage Foundation notes another dire problem. There are simply not enough Russian peasants left. Stalin's slaughters, the toll of World War II, and the practice of uncontrolled abortion have done their work only too well. Many villages consist only of old women and invalids. There are not enough hands to produce the food even if an adequate economic structure were developed.

Gorbachev has finally adopted a sensible land policy. But it may have come three years too late, when his political clout and personal prestige have already been weakened by bungled industrial and urban economic reforms. It will not put food on the table, and without food on the table his political reforms may be too little, too late.

RICO Is Bad Law

ONE OF THE MANY ironies of the legislative process, as it has developed over the past generation on Capitol Hill, is the inverse relationship between the growing size of congressional staff and the professional quality of the legislative product. [See also "While Justice Sleeps," p. 24, for the judicial variant of this problem.] Each year, the federal judiciary and private litigants devote increasing time and resources to deciphering legislative intent and plugging statutory gaps, much of which would be unnecessary if members of Congress and their staffs occasionally paused to parse sentences and define terms rather than rushing headlong from one "good idea" to another.

Which brings us to the matter of RICO. While there is certainly no shortage of competition, the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act may well be the most ineptly drafted legislative exercise in recent years. RICO was designed to provide the Federal Government with "new weapons of unprecedented scope for an assault upon organized crime." However, its authors forgot to specify anywhere in the statute that organized crime was the intended target of these weapons. As a result, RICO has provided the Federal Government with "new weapons of unprecedented scope for an assault" upon American business.

In particular, the problem centers on the "civil RICO" provisions of the law, which are now invoked in more than one thousand lawsuits annually, up from approximately one hundred annually in 1984. An estimated 93 per cent of all such lawsuits are directed against legitimate organizations that have no connection with organized crime.

Civil RICO suits are brought, not by the Department of Justice, but by private individuals now able to transform garden-variety state fraud offenses and contract disputes into federal matters. If successful in proving their case at trial—not on the basis of traditional criminal standards of proof "beyond a reasonable doubt" but on the basis of the far more relaxed civil "preponderance of evidence" standards—they are able to reap triple damages. This has led one federal judge to describe RICO as encouraging "treasure hunts" by plaintiffs. Those businesses that are loth to run the risk of being characterized as "racketeers" on the basis of such standards must usually resign themselves to unfavorable out-of-court settlements.

Increasingly typical of these RICO lawsuits is the one recently decided by a federal appeals court in Pennsylvania in which 27 anti-abortion protestors, found to have trespassed upon the property of an abortion clinic, were judged to be racketeers liable for triple damages for harm done to the clinic's medical equipment. Civil RICO suits have been brought by one faction in a successional dispute in a synagogue, by landlords and tenants suing and counter-suing one another over maintenance responsibilities, and by an alleged sting-operation victim against the FBI itself. The damage to our traditional division between matters appropriate to state and federal courts is severe.

Other provisions of the RICO statute designed to provide extraordinary remedies in the fight against organized crime, such as the freezing of all of a defendant's assets pending trial, have also been ostentatiously employed by federal prosecutors such as Rudolph Giuliani against legitimate business enterprises. William Safire has aptly described this as "Red Queen justice"—verdict first, trial afterward.

Too many conservatives have wrongly blamed the courts for these extreme applications of RICO. Instead, their ire should be directed at the legislative third-raters whose job it was, when RICO was being drafted, to cultivate some rudimentary understanding of the potential reach of their handiwork. It is not the job of the courts to remedy defects in the drafting process or to interpret statutes unreasonably even if that is the only way to ensure reasonable results. If Congress wants to curtail the new regime of private criminal prosecutions, it should throw out RICO lock, stock, and harassment.

The FS-X Question

THE UNITED STATES spends about 6 per cent of its GNP, roughly $1,200 per capita, on defense. The comparable figures for Japan are 1.5 per cent and $200. A decade ago this imbalance might have persuaded Washington to allow, if not encourage, Tokyo to go it alone in developing and producing its next-generation attack aircraft, and indeed, that is exactly what the Japanese had originally intended to do. But last June, following intense criticism of its massive trade deficit with the United States, Japan was pressured into giving part of the FS-X project to the export-hungry U.S. aircraft industry. As the deal now stands, the $1.2-billion development program for the

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A Rich Man's Tax?

CITIZENS FOR TAX JUSTICE calls it an "outrageous giveaway to the wealthy." The *New York Times* asks "Why Stroke the Rich?" And even the *Wall Street Journal* reports that "New Tax Proposals Would Benefit Corporations, Wealthy . . ." The notion that capital gains are the province of the super-rich is the driving force behind the opposition to the Administration's proposal to cut the rate at which capital gains are taxed. Yet recently published IRS data show most taxpayers with capital-gains income to be of fairly modest means:

DISTRIBUTION OF CAPITAL GAINS, 1987

Gross Income	Number of Returns (Millions)	Capital-Gains Income (Billions)	Capital Gains Per Return (Average)
$ 0-10,000	1.4	$ 2.2	$ 1,571
10-25,000	2.2	5.1	2,318
25-50,000	3.4	11.9	3,500
50-100,000	2.5	21.6	8,640
100,000+	0.8	39.3	49,125
Total	10.3	$80.2	$ 7,786

Nearly 70 per cent of the 10.3 million tax returns reporting capital-gains income in 1987 were filed by taxpayers with gross incomes below $50,000; more than one-third had incomes below $25,000. Not surprisingly, the dollar amounts are weighted heavily toward the upper incomes, with 49 per cent of all capital-gains income accruing to the 8 per cent of capital-gains taxpayers with incomes in the $100,000-plus bracket.

The specifics of the President's proposal point toward a still more egalitarian disposition of tax benefits. In general, 45 per cent of capital-gains income would be excluded from the tax base, thereby cutting the maximum effective capital-gains tax rate from 28 per cent to 15 per cent. But individuals earning less than $20,000 will be granted a 100 per cent exclusion, virtually absolving them from the tax. Gains arising from the sale of "collectibles"—old masters, antique furniture, etc., will not qualify for the lower rates. Ditto for gains arising from the sale of entire buildings or the capital gains of corporations; and starting in 1995 all assets will have to be held for at least three full years before qualifying for the 15 per cent rate, effectively excluding all but the most passive investors from direct tax-cut benefits.

It's fair to say, however, that the indirect benefits of lower capital-gains taxes redound to all stockholders, not just those who sell stock in a given year. A New York Stock Exchange survey conducted in mid 1985 put the median household income of the 47 million shareholders in public corporations at $36,800, with a median portfolio of only $6,200. The Exchange also estimated that as of year-end 1980—the latest figures available—an additional 133 million individuals owned stock indirectly, via pension plans, life-insurance policies, mutual-savings bank accounts, etc.

There may be legitimate reasons to oppose the Administration's capital-gains tax proposal. A pro-rich bias, however, is not one of them. —ED RUBENSTEIN

FS-X will be shared, 60 per cent going to Mitsubishi, 40 per cent to General Dynamics.

This arrangement is far from perfect. The U.S. trade deficit would decline more, and Japan could buy more planes at lower cost, if the present version of the F-16, widely acknowledged to be the best fighter aircraft in the world, were purchased directly from General Dynamics. But Japan has not purchased fighters off the shelf since 1955, and to expect it to do so now would be to pretend that its economic transformation over the past three decades hadn't occurred.

Opponents of the FS-X deal fear that it will give Tokyo access to U.S. expertise, in the fields of both technology and production, that could eventually be applied to the development of a Japanese aerospace industry that would compete with U.S. firms. This fear seems groundless. The Japanese, after all, were coerced into adopting the F-16's basic design instead of developing one of their own, and, in any event, the F-16 represents a 1970s technology that is not relevant in developing the next generation of civilian jet transports. The flow of usable technology may well be in the other direction: the version of the agreement approved by the President assures that General Dynamics and other U.S. firms will have access to any new technology developed by the Japanese in the course of the project, while restricting Japan from applying our computer technology to other aircraft.

Japan should be pressured to expand its defense efforts to levels commensurate with its economic status, but this need not require a military budget proportionate to that of the United States. Instead, we ought

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Why Gingrich Won

Because he used a knee and thumb;
Because the party's pooped and numb;
Because Bob Michel is a mouse;
Because they yearn to run the House;
But most of all because he tied
A tin can to the Speaker's hide.

W. H. von Dreele

to encourage Japan to increase its economic and military aid to the nations of the Pacific basin, a move that would bolster both Western security and the trade balances of the United States and Japan.

London in New York

Edward Koch, who has been mayor of New York longer than Margaret Thatcher has been prime minister of Great Britain, is seeking his fourth term. Given the ideological climate of the city, in which the moderately liberal Koch appears as a kind of Jesse Helms, he may well fail to win the Democratic nomination (in which case, he would run as an independent).

The interest of this election, though, centers on the possibility of a Republican victory, the first since John Lindsay's (if that counts). Since conventional wisdom holds that a Republican has to be a liberal to win in New York, the GOP front-runner, former U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani, is seeking the endorsement of the city's small Liberal Party.

Giuliani, it must be noted, is not Lindsay II. There is no liberal wing in the GOP nationally that seeks to puff him as the Second Coming, as Lindsay was puffed. Lindsay had a long and flamboyant record of liberalism as a congressman; Giuliani is a political novice who made his name by placing handcuffs on people in front of television cameras. Some were criminals (which pleased conservatives); others were Wall Streeters (which pleased liberals).

But Giuliani's courtship of liberal favor is disturbing. New York is much worse off socially and structurally than it was when John Lindsay took office (John Lindsay's taking office accounts for much of the differential). The housing stock has declined drastically. The roads and bridges, turn of the century or older, are falling apart. The schools are a mess.

Addressing these problems requires a fresh and radical outlook, which Giuliani is unlikely to find among his new friends. Ronald Lauder, the cosmetics heir, who is challenging Giuliani for the GOP nod, would be a decent conservative candidate in a lean year. But he cannot escape the suspicion that he is a rich man looking to buy his way into politics when a more credentialed conservative is available.

Herb London, dean of the Gallatin Division of New York University, has come out against rent control and for school vouchers. He is a long shot for the Republican nomination, and a longer shot for mayor. But in a city that has a glut of politicians and a dearth of ideas, he fills an important need. The city will profit from his candidacy, and the Republican Party would do itself honor by giving him its support.

Reagan for the Defense

Proving once again that he is no potted plant, Oliver North's lawyer, Brendan Sullivan, has asked Judge Gerhard Gesell to compel Ronald Reagan to testify as a defense witness. Gesell has nixed the request for the time being.

Sullivan's strategy is evidently to make the case as complicated and embarrassing as possible for the government. All the same, he has a point. Bud McFarlane has already told the jury that Reagan was personally involved in behind-the-scenes moves to arrange aid to the Contras through Honduras. If North was led to believe that Reagan supported his actions, any legal guilt on his part is of course mitigated. Reagan's testimony could well be pertinent.

Nobody wants to see a former President haled into court. But it's only fair to point out that Reagan could have spared himself this annoyance, and possibly worse to come, if he had pardoned the man he called "a national hero."

On the other hand, Sullivan may be laying the groundwork for a motion to throw out some of the major charges or for an appeal after conviction. It's even conceivable that he doesn't actually want Reagan to testify; if, that is, North was really acting on his own, as seems at least in character for a man who, to put it kindly, sometimes showed a willingness to serve his country without waiting to be asked.

Francis Russell, RIP

"Do you recall when we first met?" he wrote to me in December. "It was at the *NR* weekly meeting in 1958. I brought with me Paul Keating, a friend of my Dublin days and then some sort of second secretary for Ireland at the United Nations. He later became Irish ambassador to England, then to the UN, and died not too long after that. One slack day he let me sit on the UN floor with him, poised between Israel and Iraq. Iraq was still a kingdom, and the man sitting next to us was hanged by his heels in Baghdad following the revolution there. Paul did not much like Irish-American politicians and used to go to the Hungarian Catholic church in New York to

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avoid them. A devout Catholic, he could not stand the cardinal. I once asked him if the Israelis disliked the American Jews as much as he disliked the Irish-American pols. I still recall his answer: 'Yes, but they don't dare say so.' I thought this might amuse you.

"Bill, in another three weeks I shall be entering into my eightieth year! I cannot account for it and I am appalled. It shouldn't have happened to so nice a person. Luckily my health is good outside my deafness and I am still the village bicycle rider. But, bogged down in writing and in domestic problems, I have not written for *NR* as I used to. Must try to change that. I do hope we may meet in 1989. I seem to have become reclusive if not a recluse."

Francis Russell did not come often to New York, indeed he seemed unhappy away from Massachusetts. His final book (as it turned out) was *The Knave of Boston*, a history of the Democratic pols who had run Boston since shortly after the Civil War (I contributed the introduction). Before that he had greatly involved himself in exploring the Sacco-Vanzetti case. He began his exploration confident that both men were innocent, and ended his book *Tragedy in Dedham* convinced that Sacco was definitely guilty, Vanzetti possibly innocent. His challenge to American mythology prodded a half-dozen rebuttals, but he persevered and brought out a second book 24 years later: *Sacco & Vanzetti: The Case Resolved.*

But his major literary-historical achievement was his biography of Warren Harding, *The Shadow of Blooming Grove*, a work meticulously researched and lyrically set down. It arrived to readers with blank spaces: a nephew of the deceased President had sued, contending that Warren Harding's love letters were embarrassing to his descendants. But even without the texts, Mr. Russell established that our 29th President had not one but two mistresses while in the White House.

Francis Russell was a quiet, gentle man, fastidious yet passionate in his pursuit of his quarry, which was historical truths. His book on the knaves of Boston has a passage that laments, more movingly than any other I've seen, the changes brought on in the area in which he grew up, by its current residents, with their anarchic passion to smash. We mourn our longtime associate, whose name appears on our masthead for the last time, and extend our condolences to his wife and daughter. —WFB

That's Show Business

As Mr. Gorbachev's routine
Wins bravos in the mezzanine,
While on the aisle the critics hail
His hoochie-cooch behind a veil,
Our top banana still reviews
The best scenario to choose.

W. H. VON DREELE

NOTES & ASIDES

☐ Memo to: Our readers
From: WFB

John McLaughlin, our resourceful and brilliantly informed Washington correspondent, will after ten years bow to the demands of television, to which he has made a commitment for a third program (this one to be five days a week) to be launched April 17. Accordingly, he has resigned from *NR*. We greatly regret this, we thank him for his sterling performance as author of his column and of Cato, and we look forward to occasional contributions from him when he turns away from the tube to the written word. We wish him (and his distinguished wife, President Reagan's Secretary of Labor) a happy, productive future.

☐ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I enjoy reading NATIONAL REVIEW very much. I am only 12 years old. I am very much interested in politics. My uncle (who is a subscriber also) got me a subscription because I was reading his so much. Please keep making your magazine.

Sincerely,
Kevin Antaya
South Windsor, Conn.

Dear Kevin: We will, thanks. And keep making your letters. Cordially, WFB

☐ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I dreamed the following dream the other night. Perhaps you can make some sense out of it.

The sky opened and a voice shouted down from the highest firmament of the world, a deafening sound, as if generated by the force of Heaven's own thunder, and it said: LET THIS BE A LESSON FOR ALL MANKIND; WHERE THE ID BE, LET THE EGO BE! But WFB, who practiced psychoanalysis as a child, immediately detected the error, and in a fit of hubris admonished the Deity on 1) the corruption of Freudian Dogma, and 2) the improper use of the subjunctive. WFB sent God a memo:

> On the understanding that I am neither theologian nor close observer of extramundane affairs, I write as a grammaticist and a lay Freudian about events precipitated by Your recent disfiguration of what was venerable and time-tested into vulgar artificiality, and about Your committing an indefensible abuse against the English language. First, the proper phrase is, "Where the Id *was*, let the Ego be."

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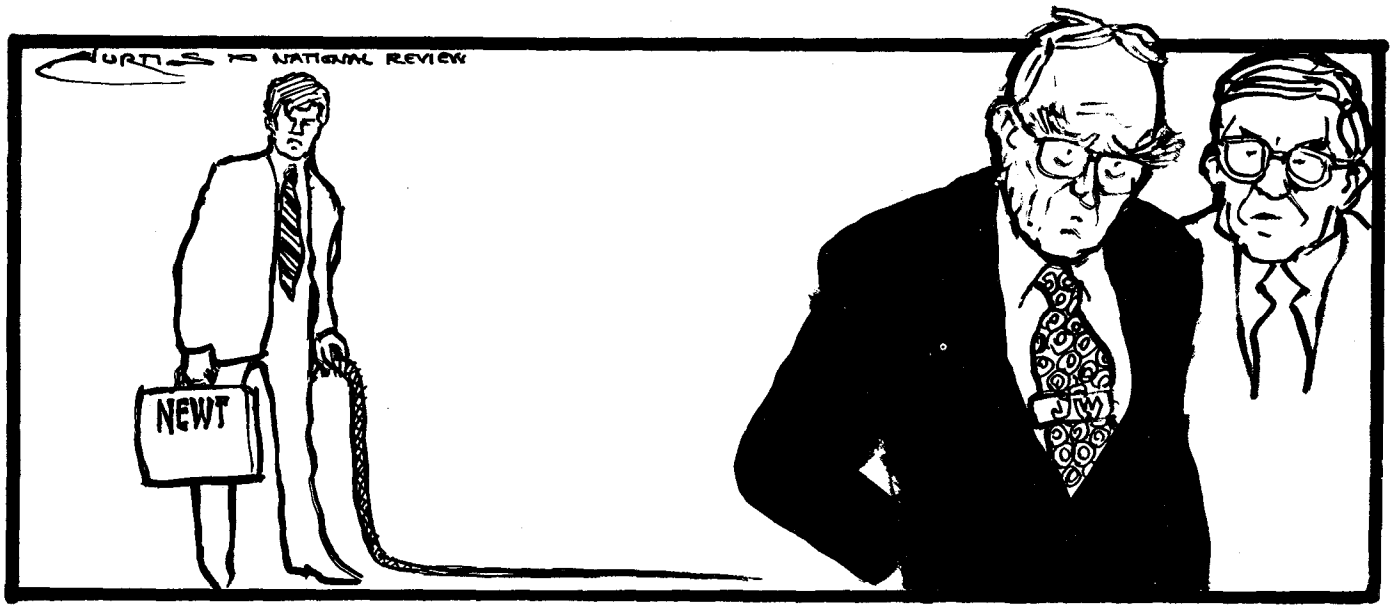

"Guess who was elected Minority Whip, Mr. Speaker!"

And second, the use of the subjunctive mood in the first part of that statement is not modern English. Fowler: "The objection to [these] subjunctives . . . is that they diffuse an atmosphere of dullness and formalism over the writing in which they occur . . . "

Cordially,
—WFB

The Deity was furious and hurled thunderbolts at WFB. But they all missed their target, and Buckley looked up at Heaven and laughed defiantly. But as if by a decree of Fate, a final thunderbolt got WFB in the most vulnerable part of his body, the *corpus conservatum*, and he was struck dead. And then what followed was exceedingly uncanny; the dissolution of WFB's body occurred in much the same way as that of the slain Dracula. First the flesh disappears, then the bones, after that the ashes, and then, finally, nothing remains but the stake and the cross. But in WFB's case, the process was even more bizarre. The images that appeared must give one pause. They were: the first 26 Fibonacci numbers, a quincunx, the decimal reciprocals of the prime numbers from 7 to 46, a bronze coin bearing the likeness of the maternal grandmother of Pierre Simon de LaPlace, a baseball bat autographed by Phil Linz, a detailed map of Robert Stack's house, and Michael Dukakis's ACLU membership card.

These all disappeared in time, and all that was left were the following words, etched into the pavement of K Street by fire:

BEST REGARDS,
ENCEPHALOPHONICALLY
—WFB

D. Foglietta
Scranton, Pa.

Dear Mr. Foglietta: Nice. But God invented the subjunctive. *Fiat lux*. Let there be light. I'd look around for an anti-dream pill. If you find one, please send prescription to our bookkeeper. Cordially, WFB

☐ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Oh my, here's proof of what too much Western Civ can do—white undergraduates at Stanford holding candlelight vigils and defacing posters! Undoubtedly, the fascist Hoover Institution is behind this. Thank God the "Students of Color Coalition" seems to have the situation well in hand. I am perplexed, however. I don't know what they mean by "multicultural sensitivity" and I'm sure my Stanford MA will be revoked unless I find out ASAP. Any words of advice?

Sincerely concerned,
Carl F. Engelhardt
Beige-Colored American of German Extraction
(Not eligible, however, for membership in the Students of Color Coalition)
APO, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Engelhardt: The only thing to do is to go back to Stanford, and start all over again. While there, be sure to deface Western Civilization. Cordially, WFB

☐ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Having just received my NATIONAL REVIEW Gold MasterCard card, I hereby await permission to begin charging to my heart's delight.

Sincerely,
Edward Loss Jr.
College Park, Md.

Dear Mr. Loss: If you have acquired a NATIONAL REVIEW MasterCard, you should declare in favor of private deficit spending, while of course maintaining our collegiate position against federal deficit spending. Cordially. **—WFB**

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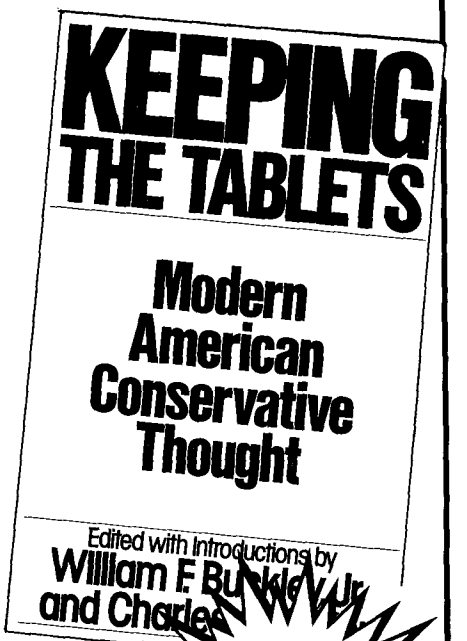

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A WET MAYOR OR WHAT?

JOHN R. COYNE JR.

THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY parade in Chicago this year was nicely symmetrical. In the first rank was Mayor Eugene Sawyer, leading his second and last parade, having been beaten for the Democratic mayoral nomination in the February 28 primary by Richard M. Daley, son of Himself and a highly praised public official in his own right.

Sawyer, a black former alderman, had been chosen in a raucous all-night City Hall session to succeed Mayor Harold Washington, who died at his desk of high living, high cholesterol, and about a hundred excess pounds.

Many had expected Sawyer to serve as a stooge of the organization politicians. However, he conducted himself in office with quiet dignity and grace, and, by Chicago standards, his campaign against Daley was a model of decorum and civility. On this cold and damp St. Patrick's Day, his welcome from the predominantly Irish-American crowd was loud and cordial. After a few blocks he left the parade for a warm reviewing area, where he stayed for about an hour, then disappeared. Like his term in office, Sawyer's departure was quick, clean, and quiet.

Behind Sawyer marched Alderman Timothy Evans, Sawyer's main opponent in that all-night caucus and now the candidate of the Harold Washington Party, a hastily constructed organization growing out of Evans's inability to win the Democratic designation and his self-proclaimed role as the only legitimate heir to the Harold Washington legacy. His relationship with Washington was in many ways like the relationship between his sometime mentor, Jesse Jackson, and Martin Luther King. Both claim the legacy was directly bequeathed to them by the principals. But in both cases, no one else was around when the mantle was passed.

Evans, accompanied by a small, out-of-place group of protestors (on apartheid or the IRA or AIDS, or maybe all three), flitted among the floats, veered sharply left, apparently in search of the mayor, and also disappeared.

Then came State's Attorney Richard Daley, bareheaded, waving a shillelagh, his wife Maggie marching by his side. There was a huge Daley float, covered with family pictures, a movable family chapel rolling through Irish ancestral grounds.

As often happens in Chicago in March—although it happened only twice on St. Patrick's Day during the administration of Himself—it began to rain, then snow, then sleet. Then it did everything simultaneously, and the wind howled in off the lake, where some superstitious natives believe Himself shares quarters with the capricious God of Chicago Weather. If so, the howling wind was a howl of triumph for the son, who, although wet, had already wrapped up his April 4 victory. (Also all wet, though hardly triumphant, was former Alderman Edward Vrydolyak, sloshing along toward the end of the parade through rapidly emptying streets. Vrydolyak, former Democrat and arch-enemy of Mayor Washington, had won the Republican primary with a last-minute write-in campaign against a non-resident urologist, whose name no one can remember, or ever knew.)

Early in the campaign, some prognosticators were laying odds that Daley would falter—or would be tripped up. These were not groundless expectations. Daley, like his father, has a stumble-tongued way of talking that has gotten him into trouble in the past. And his opponents, along with correspondents from the national media, were prepared to focus on the subject of race to the exclusion of all others.

THE TONE was set by Thomas Todd, an attorney and black activist. "Race is not *an* issue in this race for mayor," Todd thundered. "Race is the *only* damn issue in this campaign." The *New York Times*, among others, seemed to agree, and the theme was picked up and amplified by a whole gaggle of black politicians and what we like to call "activists" (as in, How much does an *activist* make, mommy?).

There was the Reverend Al Sampson, who looks and sounds like the Reverend Al Sharpton and the Reverend Reginald Bacon, calling Daley "Pharaoh's son" and threatening to "shut down" the city if Daley won. There was Lu Palmer, called a "community leader," labeling Daley "a racist" and "an enemy of black people." There was Alderman Dorothy Tillman, a leaner but dumber (to use Mayor Washington's characterization) black version of Bella Abzug in a Dale Evans hat, ripping Daley with similarly abusive rhetoric and calling the sitting mayor "Uncle Tom Sawyer." There was U.S. Representative Gus Savage, called by the *Tribune* "our fool on the Hill," who threatened to throw DNC Chairman Ron Brown's "Oreo you-know-what" out of town if he came to campaign for Daley.

And finally, there is Jesse Jackson, far from a hero in his own home town. He began as an Evans supporter, then switched to Sawyer. When

Mr. Coyne, a former presidential speechwriter, works for a major corporation in Chicago.

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Sawyer lost the primary, Jackson shifted his support back to Evans, then found himself caught in the middle. Although he talked all around the edges of the race issue, Jackson didn't call in the heavy artillery. To do so against the democratically chosen Democratic candidate, carrying his national party's blessing (Ted Kennedy came to town to speak for Daley), could have made Jackson's next presidential run a no-funds kamikaze exercise. And when it comes to his own interests, Jackson is always a prudent man.

AT ONE POINT, Daley seemed to have made the mistake his opponents were waiting for. Late in the primary, speaking at a Southwest Side rally, Daley appeared to say, "You want a white mayor."

Up to that moment, there had been nothing remotely resembling a racist sentiment uttered by Daley. This one, however, electrified the media. For days, on every TV talk show and news program in town, we were treated over and over to replays of the remarks, recorded by Sawyer aides.

However, no matter how often the tape was played and at what speed, no one could authoritatively say that he had actually used the word "white." True believers heard it, of course. But to most of us, it sounded more like "a what mayor" or even "a wet mayor."

After the tape had been played for the 731st time, a consensus started to emerge. It seemed a classic case of Chicago-speak, of which the Daley clan has long been master—a gargling, blurbling, quarking, strangled exhalation delivered in a jumble of tooth-grinding consonants and broad, tortured vowels, all erupting in a soul-stirring blurt. This is the way Daley talks, and the betting is that he was trying to deliver the standard opening line of his stump speech: "What you want is a mayor that [never who] . . ." But this time, it came out as, "You want a what mayor . . ." Some of us prefer "wet," but the point is that whatever (or wetever) it was, once out, it couldn't be crammed back. And everyone versed in Chicago-speak soon forgot the whole flap.

True, the polling split significantly along racial lines. When the racial composition of a city is approximately fifty-fifty it always will. But the ultimate issue seemed to be who was most clearly perceived as being best able to provide basic services and satisfy basic needs. Rightly or wrongly, Daley was perceived as that person—or perhaps more accurately, the person who could best put together and energize the necessary apparatus.

Family had something to do with it, of course. A *Chicago Sun-Times* poll, taken at the height of Harold Washington's popularity, showed that one-third of all Chicago's black voters wished that Richard J. Daley was still mayor. The first Daley was always liked and respected in the black community, and the drive for black control of City Hall did not begin until after his death.

Through subsequent administrations, services and living conditions deteriorated steadily, and black Chicagoans—especially during the great snow years 1978 and 1979—found themselves denied the most basic city services. They felt they had been ignored—and they had. The result was a grassroots uprising that swept Harold Washington into office. As is customary in such cases, self-styled leaders hurried to get in front of the parade, offering abstract ideological answers to concrete problems.

But those answers don't sell for long. Government may not be able to solve problems of drug abuse or the growth of the underclass overnight. But voters can demand that government provide the services it contracts with the voters to provide.

That is why there will be a second Daley in City Hall. And that is why the slogans and harangues of the movement types sounded so dated and shrill during the campaign. The election may or may not signal the end of effective black-power politics, and Daley may be a what mayor—or even wet. But a biracial majority of Chicagoans seems to believe that whatever the modifier, he can, like his father, get the job done. □

ART FOR WHOSE SAKE?

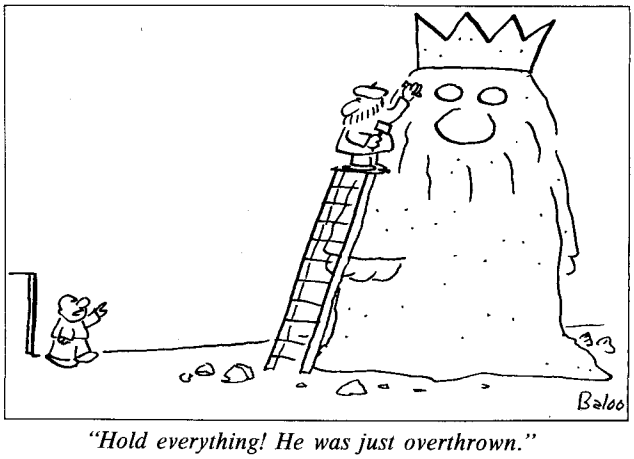
STEVE MARLIN

AT THE School of the Art Institute of Chicago last month, a "minority exhibition" open to the public featured a display in which the American flag was laid on the floor. Although the media reported some of the ensuing furor, they did not provide a full description of Mr. "Dread" Scott Tyler's exhibit. We hereby oblige.

There was a photo-montage on the wall, in black and white. In the foreground of this montage, several coffins bulked large, draped with American flags. Grim Asiatic figures lurked in the background. One group stood with fists raised threateningly. Another group was busy burning an American flag. A crudely lettered sign was held aloft, reading: "Yankee go home—son of bitch."

A white margin above the montage contained the printed theme: "What Is the Proper Way to Display the American Flag?" Under the photograph was a ledge holding two books in which visitors were invited to enter their comments.

Directly under the ledge, an American flag was spread upon the floor—obviously the "artist's" concept of "the proper way to display the American



"Hold everything! He was just overthrown."

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flag." And it was so arranged that if a visitor wished to write in the book, he or she would have to tread upon the flag.

In the final weeks of the exhibition a peculiar routine took shape. Two American war veterans would enter the room, lift the flag from the floor, fold it ceremoniously and place it upon the ledge. Presently someone, perhaps a student, would appear, unfold the flag and spread it back on the floor. Upon which the war veterans would advance again, refold the flag, and replace it on the ledge.

This charade was the result of a solomonic ruling by Circuit Judge Kenneth Gillis. He had refused to order a halt to the grounding of the flag, but he had also ruled that picking up and folding the flag was permissible.

An official sign posted near the display was equally ambiguous. It read: "The Chicago Police Department has advised the School of the Art Institute of Chicago that it is legally permitted to exhibit the artwork 'What Is [Etc.]?'. . . . They have also advised that to publicly walk on, trample . . . or defile the flag is to be guilty of a Class 4 felony and subject to arrest."

On March 4, Susan Willhoft, a sixth-grade teacher from Arlington, Virginia, fell into the trap. She was charged with walking on the flag, a felony that carries a penalty of three years in prison and a $10,000 fine. "She thought it was participatory art and she was participating," said her attorney.

This walk-on-the-flag display was part of "an exhibition of 66 works in all media by minority students, sponsored by Ethnic American Students United." The question arises, why a special "minority exhibition" in the School of the Art Institute? The school's publicity department informed us that the Ethnic American Students United had requested a minority exhibition and the school administration had granted the request "as a matter of course." Were these minority students excluded from the previous, regular school exhibitions? The answer: The chances that all these minority students would be included in a general exhibition "would be slimmer."

But there is a more convincing explanation for this segregated exhibition. Hark back to the general (non-ethnic) student exhibition one year ago, and to the tumult that surrounded David Nelson's painting of the late Mayor Harold Washington clad in bra and panties. The black students had been up in arms about the episode. We learned indirectly (and it is readily surmised) that the school administrators had since decided to appease the black students by allowing them to hold their own exhibit.

An interesting sidelight is cast by a statement from David Nelson in discussing the walk-on-the-flag affair. Nelson related that last year Scott Tyler had made a statement criticizing the Washington-in-drag painting because it "attacked blacks, homosexuals, and women." (Women are presumably included in this list of victims "as a matter of course.")

The school administration's handling of Mr. Nelson a year ago was very different to its handling of Mr. Tyler. Last spring's exhibition was closed to the public. Black aldermen broke in, terrorized Art Institute President Tony Jones, snatched the Washington painting off the wall, vandalized it, and carried it off. Mr. Jones, Marshall Field IV, and the Board of Art Institute Trustees responded to the black aldermen's illegal invasion by issuing a full-page public apology to the black community, published in three Chicago newspapers, at the Art Institute's expense.

But in respect to the Tyler display, the Art Institute administrators were suddenly courageous. They defended Tyler's trumpery as "art," no less. Thousands of citizens demonstrating outside the Art Institute, angry resolutions passed in the municipal and state legislatures, failed to shake them. The Institute would be a refuge for defilement of the American flag in a Higher Cause (at this point a heavenly choir is heard).

Maybe the happiest denouement would be if President Tony Jones, his lieutenants, and those on the Board of Trustees who upheld them were relieved of their responsibilities. Tell them it would make an interesting "happening." That should do it. □

Mr. Marlin is a Chicago-based freelancer.

HONG KONG GONE

WILLIAM McGURN

With less than a decade to go before the sun finally sets on the British Empire with the surrender of Hong Kong, Her Majesty's representatives here in the Crown Colony are skidding out on a banana peel. At last month's debate in the House of Lords, for example, it was revealed that Great Britain is small enough to deny thirty Hong Kong war widows the right to live in the land their husbands died for. Whereas just five years ago Mrs. Thatcher would go to Peking and boldly note that "those who don't honor one treaty will not honor another," this month a foreign-affairs committee from the House of Commons arrives here to investigate why Britain is not honoring a treaty Mrs. Thatcher herself signed.

That treaty is the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration, the document that sets out the terms for the transfer of sovereignty from London to Peking when the 99-year lease on Hong Kong's New Territories expires in 1997. Initially, it was met with enthusiasm: after all, the agreement provided that "the social and economic systems in Hong Kong shall remain unchanged" and pointed toward self-rule by a local government enjoying "a high degree of autonomy." In official Green and White Papers, the picture presented to people here by the British was one in which China would get Hong Kong but Hong Kong would get democracy.

However, the considerable evidence that this picture is not going to be brought into being has led to a massive collapse of confidence, with anyone who can scrape up enough money for a passport getting out. If the

Mr. McGurn is deputy editorial-page editor of the Asian Wall Street Journal. *He is also editor of* Basic Law, Basic Questions *(Review Publishing Co., Hong Kong), a collection of essays charting Britain's progress in implementing the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration.*

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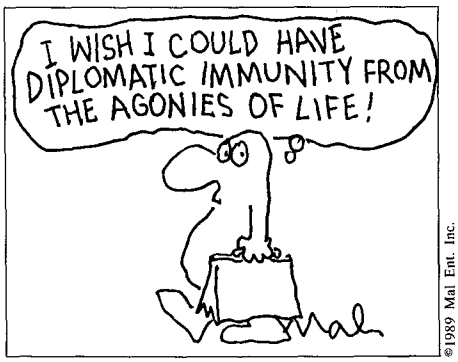
Commons delegation report is to be characterized by a frankness hitherto absent from the Tories' treatment of its prize colony, it will have to zero in on this point: that the failure here is a *Conservative* one, Margaret Thatcher's in particular. It was her government that signed the agreement with Peking; her government that sold it to the British subjects of Hong Kong on the basis of certain reforms to come; and her government that is backing away from initiating the changes that would give that agreement a fighting chance. "We expected problems with China, but what we never expected was the degree to which Britain would give in to every Chinese whim," says Martin Lee, Queen's Counsel and champion of the democratic lobby here. "All we are trying to do is to hold Britain and China to *their* agreement."

At its root, the tension over Hong Kong's future is owing to the more or less unique structure of its colonial administration, where authority is centralized in a governor who holds as much power as Genghis Khan ever did. This works because of the marvelous disinclination of British officials to invoke their powers, reserving them, as intended, for times of emergency. Mainland leaders, by contrast, have never stood accused of a disinclination to invoke power. Hence the political structure will have to be altered to prevent China from abusing it.

The agreed-upon solution to this dilemma was thus to replace an informal British restraint with formal checks on power, primarily by making future Hong Kong politicians accountable to the people; thus the Joint Declaration stipulates that a legislature "shall be constituted by elections," and most people interpreted this as meaning direct elections by 1988. In this context, Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe's insistence that he never actually *promised* direct elections by 1988 makes him sound like a divorce lawyer whose client suddenly decides he's not going to give his wife the house after all.

What made holding direct elections by 1988 so critical was that it was the last chance to influence the Basic Law, the mini-constitution that will govern post-1997 Hong Kong. "The real question is power," explains John Walden, a former high-ranking career-civil-service officer here who has written two books on the government's



ever-widening credibility gap. "If the Chinese draft a Basic Law where the legislature has no power and it is still all centralized in the executive, it hardly matters whether the legislature is later elected or selected at random. The most important component of real democracy will still be missing: accountability."

Throughout all this, Mrs. Thatcher's silence has been thundering across the seas. The most likely explanation why she does not even defend her own policy, which is clearly not working, is that she is not happy with it and does not wish to have any peace-in-our-time statements about trusting in Peking's good intentions tagged to her name in the history books. It can't please her, for example, that virtually the only strong opinion Hong Kong's governor, Sir David Wilson, holds is on the "need" to send boat people back to Vietnam against their will, even though Hong Kong is suffering from an acute labor shortage. Nor can she be happy with the sight of the governor, going to Peking hat in hand to clear things with the Chinese, in a clear violation of the Joint Declaration's provision that during the run-up to 1997 "the Government of the United Kingdom will be responsible for the administration of Hong Kong" and enjoy China's "cooperation."

But the most basic reason for her displeasure must be the Foreign Office approach, which runs counter to her every instinct to speak forthrightly on matters of principle. A case in point came earlier this year when the *Wall Street Journal* carried an editorial arguing that Britain's failure to enforce the 1984 Joint Declaration called her honor into question. The reaction from the Foreign Office was swift; could the prime minister have space to reply?

Yes, indeed, said the *Journal*; but instead of the Iron Lady, Sir Geoffrey was trotted out like a trained seal, defending a Joint Declaration the editorial hadn't attacked, denying a "brain drain" that even the British government here says is its top problem, and making it perfectly clear that however bad things get Britain will not do anything China disapproves of. Behind the doors of 10 Downing Street Mrs. Thatcher maintained her Trappist-like silence.

Caught between Tory rock and Communist hard place, folks here have been voting the only way they can: with their feet. This was made more difficult by the 1981 British Nationality Act, which made it clear that Britain's nonwhite subjects were not welcome in Mother England. Nonetheless, emigration from Hong Kong has soared, with Australia, Canada, and the U.S. being the preferred destinations; and recent polls indicating that fully half the professional class intends to get out. In good Hong Kong fashion, someone has even started up a glossy new magazine called *The Emigrant*, to make a profit out of the situation.

FOR THE Chinese and British both, it is a particularly ironic denouement. What the British achieved in Hong Kong was arguably a Chinese ideal. The veteran Chinese journalist Ki-fan Tsang put it this way: "This is the only Chinese society that, for a brief span of one hundred years, lived through an ideal never realized at any time in the history of Chinese societies—a time when no man had to live in fear of the midnight knock on the door." How ironic too that the people trying hardest to preserve this British achievement are attacked by Tory MPs as "troublemakers" with "a vested interest in spreading unease."

Perhaps Hong Kong's fate was inevitable, in the sense that Britain today could never really prevent a China determined to have its way over Hong Kong. But the reason for shame is that the world's most anti-Communist and principled leader is allowing it to go down without so much as a whimper of protest over the gross violations of a treaty that bears her signature.

"For us this is the most disappointing of all," says Mr. Lee, looking worn and wan among his leatherbound texts. "If Margaret Thatcher were here in my position she'd be doing the exact same thing." □

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Some of our Justices are old and sick,
others have simply relinquished power to their clerks.
We risk having our laws decided not by 'nine old men,'
but by 36 young ones,

WHILE JUSTICE SLEEPS

TERRY EASTLAND

IN RE THE Supreme Court, as the lawyers say, public attention typically focuses on the 130 or so opinions it renders each year. But the time has come to widen the focus. When next the Court hears oral argument, ask yourself this: Is the fellow in the black robes, second from the left, actually listening? Or has his mind drifted elsewhere, perhaps to what *TV Guide* offers that afternoon? And of the 15 or so opinions of the Court assigned to him during the term, how many does he—not his clerks—actually write? Indeed, how many does he read?

Thurgood Marshall, who turned eighty last year, isn't the only Justice about whom such questions might be asked. There are others, and their continued presence on the Court raises a further question: Should Justices be required to retire when they reach a certain age? This is a question as old as the American Founding, but it deserves more serious consideration than ever before.

To be sure, there have been very old Courts in previous eras—during the 1930s President Roosevelt ridiculed the "nine old men." But the Court in 1987, before the 51-year-old Anthony Kennedy succeeded the 79-year-old Lewis Powell, was the oldest ever. And the current Court is rapidly closing in on that record. Also, this Court has more octogenarians than any previous one. Like Marshall, Justice Blackmun is eighty. And Justice Brennan is 83. The next oldest is Justice White—at 72, a relative spring chicken.

Old age is associated with certain obvious things, and they are happening. In recent years, Brennan has had gallbladder surgery; Marshall has been treated for a blood clot in his foot, and Blackmun for prostate cancer. But no physical problem has yet taken a serious toll. Close observers of the Court generally agree that Brennan appears somewhat weaker than a decade ago; that Marshall seems about the same; and that Blackmun is, by comparison with those two, positively robust. He is said to work six days a week, ten hours a day, and to do a hundred push-ups a day, not as many as Herschel Walker does, but plenty for a man of eight decades. Still, eighty is eighty, and the chances of an incapacitating disease only increase. The late William O. Douglas was 77 when he had the stroke that eventually forced him to resign.

Mr. Eastland is resident scholar at the National Legal Center for the Public Interest in Washington, D.C.

There is not only the increasing possibility of catastrophic illness; there is also the key question of mental engagement. Those who watch the Court say that Blackmun is as sharp as he ever has been (how sharp that is, is another matter). Brennan seems to have slowed some but can still hold his own; after all, he began with a lot. As for Marshall, well, Marshall is there. No one thinks he's senile, and everyone agrees that he was once quite able. But most observers wonder about his continuing interest in the Court's business.

He is said to watch lots of television, in chambers. One joke has it that if Marshall retired, at least he wouldn't be paid for watching television. (Actually, he would be; the pension is terrific.) He apparently keeps his workload to a minimum: his bench memos—the documents clerks draft summarizing key issues in a case—are limited to one page; those for other Justices typically run much longer. He also has his mind made up in some areas and won't even entertain argument. A while ago, in his usual curmudgeonly style, he told *Life* magazine: "If it's a dope case, I won't even read the petition. I ain't giving no break to no drug dealer. I won't handle incest cases either. Disgusting!" Brennan is said to consider his fellow liberal Marshall a big disappointment; he can count on Marshall's vote, but not much more.

BRENNAN ONCE SAID that a disabled Justice is almost as bad as one you disagree with. The Court does not yet have one, but it's worth recalling what happened the last time it did. Following his stroke in late 1974, Douglas was out 78 days. He missed oral arguments, conferences, the whole works. According to *The Brethren*, the other eight Justices agreed to delay cases in which Douglas was likely to be the swing vote. They postponed some of these for reargument the next term. They also decided not to let Douglas be the fourth—and final—vote necessary for the Court's accepting a case.

That is how the Douglas-less Court coped, but it didn't like it. According to *The Brethren*, Douglas had no intention of quitting, even though the stroke had affected his mind. He had moments of lucidity and energy followed by incoherence and sleep—even on the bench, when he managed to get there. He was often confused. Rumor had it

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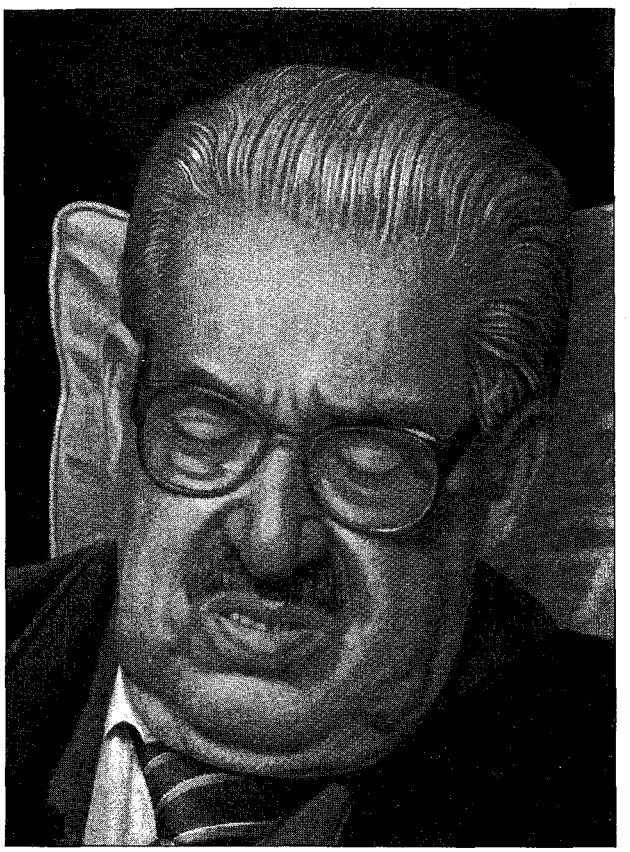
that he thought he was Chief Justice. At one point Chief Justice Burger asked Brennan to ask Douglas to resign both for his own sake and for that of the Court, but Brennan thought Douglas would never agree. He didn't even ask. And Douglas held on, unfortunately for him holding a press conference that revealed his incapacitation. Eventually his wife asked a close friend to ask him to resign. The friend did so; Douglas refused. He said he couldn't resign, that even half-functioning he would be better than no one. Douglas didn't care whether the President appointing his successor was a Republican or a Democrat; in his view the new person would be "on the wrong side." He figured he was the only one who could "blow the whistle" on the Burger Court. He saw the Court as "my life," and thought that leaving it would be tantamount to committing suicide.

The Douglas story introduces another factor: a determination not to quit the Court voluntarily. Marshall has done something unusual for a sitting Justice: he criticized a sitting President. He was determined not to retire so long as Ronald Reagan was President. He's probably set on outlasting George Bush. And whatever his mental or physical condition, there is a support system in place that might just enable him to do it. This system—a bureaucracy of law clerks—was not there in ages past, and it can prop up any Justice, whatever his physical health or intellectual ability.



Justice Horace Gray employed the first law clerk a hundred years ago. By the 1930s every Justice had one. In 1947, the Justices got a second, in 1970 a third, and shortly after that a fourth. Note that this "staff" has doubled since 1969. Little is written about it; Justices instruct clerks not to talk to the media. But the truth is that "the clerk bureaucracy," as Federal Appeals Court Judge Richard Posner has called it, plays one of the most important roles in the government today.

Consider what a Justice *must* do. The Court decides about 130 to 140 cases a year. Oral arguments take up about 150 hours. That's the only time the Justices work in public, and they don't even have to show up there. (They can listen to tapes if they want to.) The weeks they sit they also have conferences on the cases; that's when they vote. But they don't have to go to the conferences to vote; they can send their votes by memo, or by word-of-mouth, through another Justice. When you get down to it, the only thing a Justice must really do is vote, unless he's recused from a case. That, and write opinions for the Court in the 15 or so cases assigned to him. The latter task entails reading the briefs and thinking about the cases, and then writing the opinions, or so it would seem.

Of course, there are certain duties that, while not required of a Justice, can be done only by him. Clerks don't substitute for their bosses in oral argument, and they're not even allowed in the room for conferences. What the Justices can delegate is the non-public and non-ceremonial but most important and time-consuming part of their work —the actual preparation of opinions, the research, reading, thinking, and writing. This many of them do, reserving for themselves the job of editing the final product. (Justice Stevens, be it noted, is an exception, drafting the main body of all his opinions.) An aging Justice who uses his law-clerk bureaucracy skillfully can, like a smart athlete, conserve his diminishing energy and extend his career.

This is now happening. Close observers of the Court say that Marshall doesn't draft any of his own opinions and that he edits little, if at all. There is doubt about whether he even reads the briefs in the cases. And Brennan is said to edit much less heavily than he used to.

Still, Brennan maintains control over the final product; and there's little question that both Justices are getting what they want. Marshall's clerks pick his new clerks, and they are hugely protective of him. Brennan counts on contacts in law schools to send him the kind of clerks he wants. As someone knowledgeable about Supreme Court clerks told me, "He's developed a system that brings to him very liberal, very talented clerks who think as he does. They do for him what he would do for himself."

While Brennan and Marshall seem to be using the system for their purposes, with Blackmun it is a different story. He is said to spend an inordinate amount of his time cite-checking his opinions, "shepardizing" cases (searching through *Shepard's Citations* to see whether certain precedents have been overruled), and proofreading. His clerks do the substance, the thinking and writing. A joke has it that Blackmun's clerks once assigned him an opinion in a case in which they weren't interested. It may be that his clerks use him more than he uses them.

The older Justices aren't the only ones who rely heavily on clerks. Justice O'Connor, who recently had surgery for breast cancer, is extremely conscientious and works hard. But close observers say that often the principal intellectual contribution to her opinions comes from her clerks.

The heavy reliance on law clerks is bad for the justice system. Not only are clerk-written opinions stylistically dull, longer than necessary, and larded with citations from cases and other authorities. They also tend to reflect the thinking of their authors and the law schools that produced

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them, which tend to be elite, left-wing institutions, such as Harvard, Yale, and Stanford. (I'm told that only six of the 33 clerks employed during the 1985 term had voted for Ronald Reagan in 1984.) Gordon Crovitz, a graduate of Yale Law School and now assistant editorial-page editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, points out that the pedagogy at the leading law schools stresses five-prong tests and ornate balancing schemes that serve liberal ends. The result is that the products of these schools who wind up as clerks try to outdo one another by coming up with ever-more-complicated pieces of law that take the nation ever further left.

A CONSERVATIVE JUSTICE who has liberal clerks (this does happen) has to work especially hard just in editing their drafts to make sure they head in the right direction. And editing is what Justices mostly do nowadays. Less and less do they write. Posner asks a fair question: Can an editor be a great judge? Imagine, he says, Oliver Wendell Holmes coordinating a team of law clerks and secretaries and polishing the drafts that the clerks submitted to him. It is unimaginable. And as an editor, a Justice will spend a large amount of his time managing his employees—a task far different from judging.

Finally, there is a more fundamental problem: relying on clerks is a cheat on democratic government. Talk about the difference between appearance and reality: was it really Justice Blackmun who wrote the decision on some point of constitutional law today, or was it a 26-year-old clerk never appointed by the President or confirmed by the Senate?

The Court should have fewer clerks; half as many would do. That would force the Justices to spend more time preparing opinions. The result would be fewer, shorter, and more intelligible opinions, and the caseload itself would decline. The Justices would actually write more opinions themselves, thus increasing the authenticity and authority of the Court's work. Justices who couldn't cut it would be forced to step down. And those very old Justices who have been relying on clerks to extend their careers might decide to retire.

Congress could and should cut back on the annual appropriations for law clerks. But failing that, Congress should take steps to make sure that the worst-case scenario doesn't happen: a senile Justice who doesn't want to quit and who "churns" out the work, thanks to his large staff of energetic clerks. It would require a constitutional amendment, but a mandatory retirement age of 75 or eighty, for all future appointees, would do the job. Such an amendment would not compromise judicial independence, since nothing other than a calendar would signal retirement. The nation might risk losing a talented and still energetic Justice; Holmes was past ninety when he retired. But the risks are greater that without such an amendment the nation would be stuck for too long with very old men and women who, aided by the law-clerk bureaucracy, do little more than cast a vote—if that. □

WHY A GREAT BOOKS CURRICULUM?

Strange as it may seem, Lefortovo had a magnificent library! Every 10 days the librarian came to your cell with a catalog: He brought any three books you requested. In the late 1930s, during the height of Stalin's purges, members of the Moscow intelligentsia had started to disappear, and many valuable books wound up in the hands of the KGB. Mostly I read the classics. The silence of the prison proved ideal for my encounters with such familiar strangers as Homer, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Virgil, Cervantes, Rabelais. The breakthrough happened accidentally. I was reading a comedy by Aristophanes in which one character turns to another and says something like, "Aha, you have a Corinthian vase. That makes you a traitor." (Corinth was at war with Athens, where Aristophanes lived.) I laughed aloud at the connection with people separated from me by 25 centuries. Ulysses, with his wit, stubbornness and enormous curiosity — even at the edge of the abyss. Gargantua, whose laughter broke through all borders of this world. And Don Quixote — a dreamer who enjoyed life to the fullest. All these hurried toward me across the centuries. "You see," they told me, "there is nothing new in this world of ours. But how much there is that is worth living for — and, if necessary, worth dying for as well."

— **Natan Sharansky**

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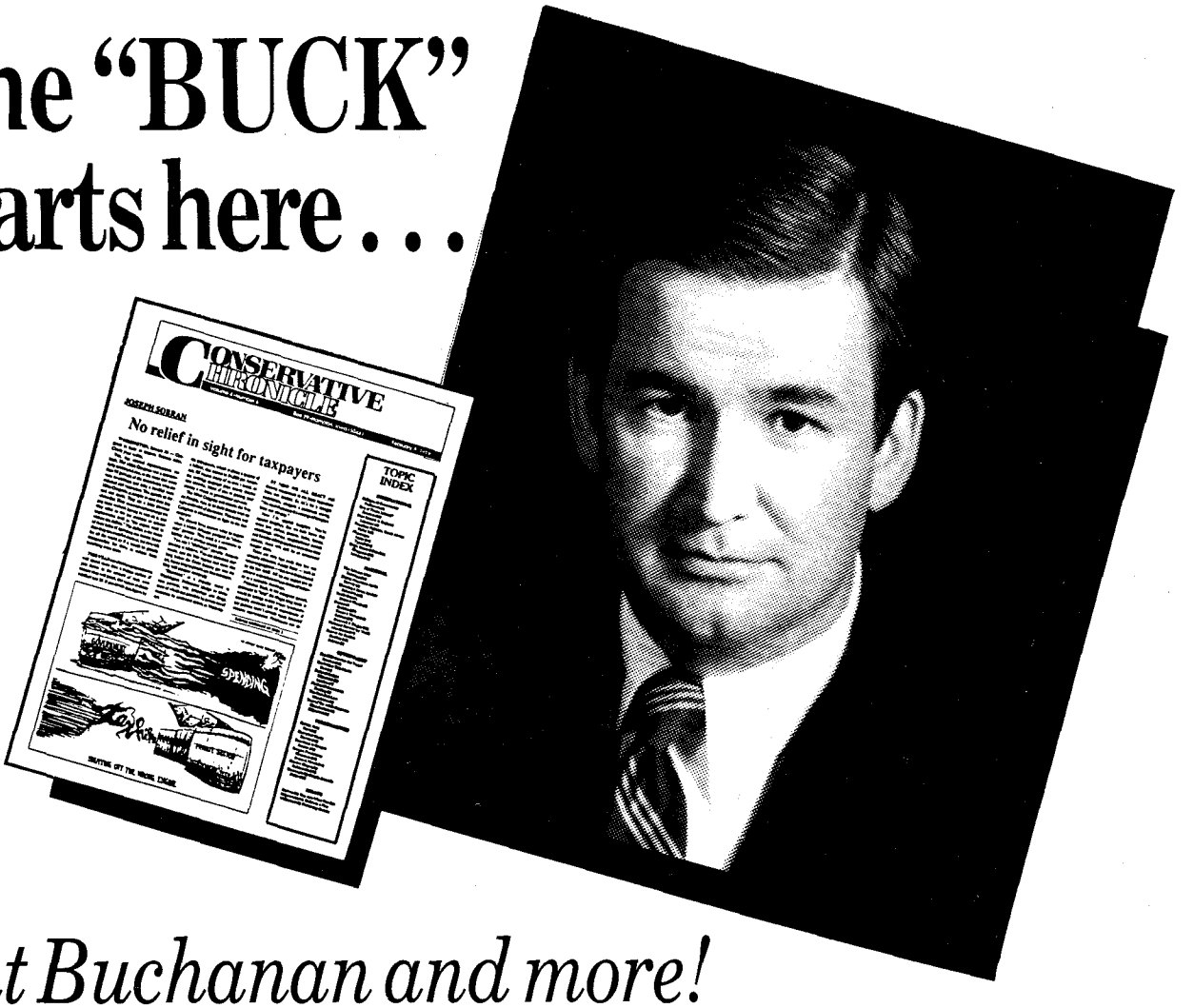

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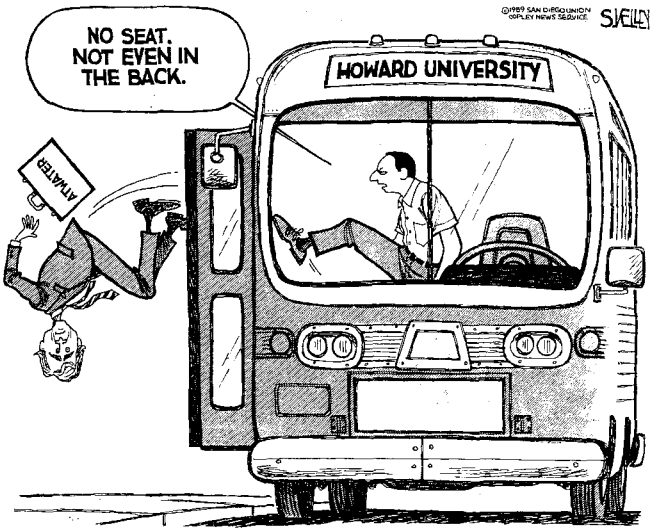
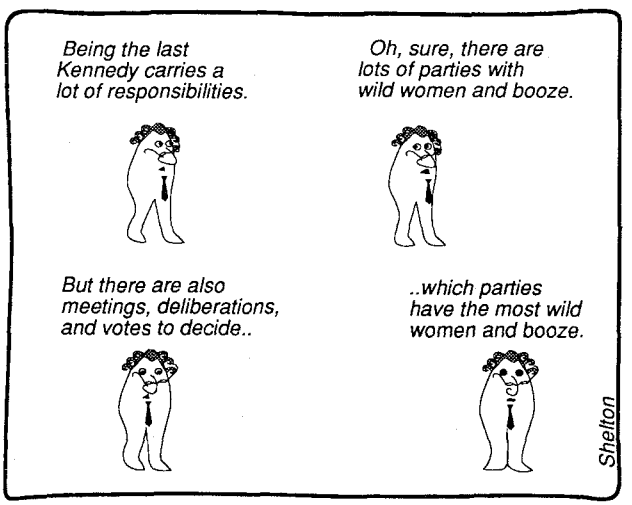
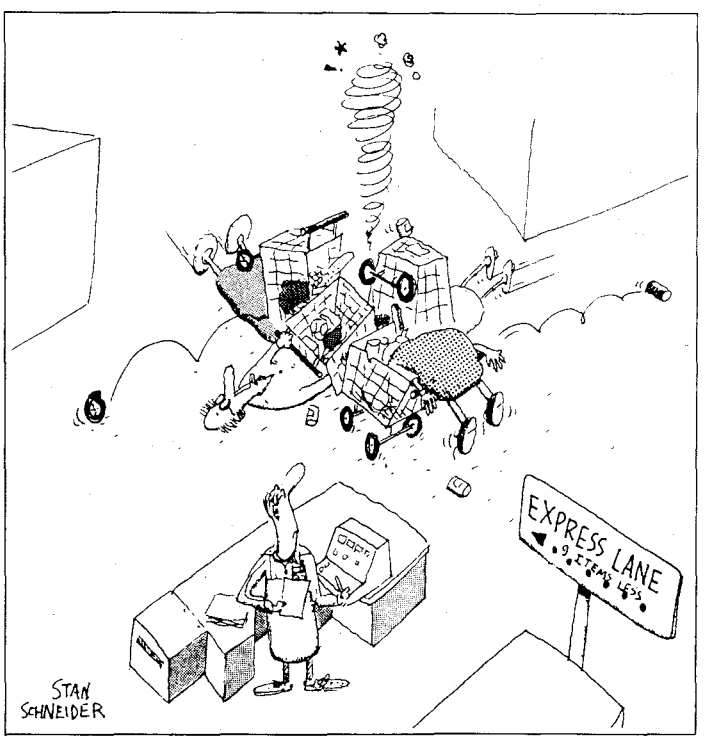


Literate Limericks

Re current best-sellers: I groan some
Whenever friends ask if I own some.
I'm not in a panic
For verses Satanic;
I still soothe the dove that is lonesome.

MILES DAVID MOORE


Being the last Kennedy carries a lot of responsibilities.
Oh, sure, there are lots of parties with wild women and booze.
But there are also meetings, deliberations, and votes to decide..
..which parties have the most wild women and booze.
Shelton



Pile-up on the Express Lane

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LIKE, I NEVER EVEN BUY BOOKS OR ANYTHING...
..BUT, YA KNOW, I HAD TO MAKE A STATEMENT OR SOMETHING...
SATANIC VERSES
SALMAN RUSHDIE
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER
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SUPPLY-SIDE HISTORY

In 1970 Keynesianism ruled, and we faced a decade of stagflation. But we're all supply-siders now, thanks in part to dinners at Michael I, and even George Bush has embraced voodoo economics. The boom can continue—but only if Mr. Bush takes the next step.

HOW REAGANOMICS MADE THE WORLD WORK

ROBERT L. BARTLEY

THE POLICY that came to be known as "Reaganomics" started more than two years before the election of Ronald Reagan. At least for me, the new era dawned on April 20, 1978. On that morning, a *Wall Street Journal* article on the House Ways and Means Committee's doubts about the Carter Administration tax proposals included the following paragraphs:

> A major cause for worry on the part of liberals and the Administration is a proposal by Representative William Steiger (R., Wis.) to reduce the tax on capital gains. Representative Steiger claims to be close to the 19 votes he needs to win approval for his amendment from the 37-member committee. . . .
>
> Representative Steiger's amendment would roll back the maximum rate on capital gains—for both individuals and corporations—to 25 per cent, the top rate in effect prior to the Tax Reform Act of 1969.
>
> While Representative Steiger argues that this tax cut would stimulate enough business activity and tax revenue to pay for itself, committee sources estimate the net annual revenue loss to the Treasury at between $2 billion and $3 billion.

Electrified by this news, I started my working day with a call to Jude Wanniski, who happened to be in Washington. Read this, I suggested, and, naturally, drop everything and go talk to Steiger. This, I said, may be what we've been looking for, the reason for the sudden surge in the stock market. For by then, these issues had been explored for innumerable hours at the Michael I restaurant and the Lehrman Institute by Jude, the already notable Canadian economist Robert Mundell, former OMB Chief Economist Arthur Laffer, and a few others.

Jude returned from Washington and produced a seminal editorial, "Stupendous Steiger" (April 26, 1978), asserting that the quiet, young, slightly built congressman from Wisconsin had "shaken the earth," that his amendment was "not one tax provision among many, but the cutting edge of an important intellectual and financial breakthrough." As he wrote, I got a call from Warren Phillips, chairman of Dow Jones & Co., publisher of the *Journal*. He said he had run into Jude while walking through the editorial-page office, that Jude had virtually grabbed him by the lapels and excitedly exclaimed that the market had bottomed, the market had bottomed. What's going on, Warren asked? Jude's a little overexcited, I explained, but watch.

Whatever the wear and tear on Warren's lapels, Jude was right, more or less. The Dow Jones average had been falling steadily since a few weeks before the Carter presidential victory, hitting a low of 742 on February 28, and hovering just above that figure into April. It turned up as Representative Steiger gathered his votes, climbing over 900 as the tax bill moved toward passage. The 1978 lows withstood two later tests as inflation was wrung out of the system, and the real stock-market boom started in 1983, with the first net tax cuts of the Reagan era.

AT THIS REMOVE, it's hard even to recall the pre-Reagan economic landscape. Do you remember the gasoline lines? How about Jimmy Carter's $50 rebate? Or his voluntary wage and price controls? Or even before that, Jerry Ford's WIN buttons, Whip Inflation Now? For the mid 1970s witnessed a crisis of not only economic policy but also economic thought. The prevailing Keynesian orthodoxy had nothing to say about stagflation. It had pretty much distilled itself down to the Phillips curve: To cure inflation, a little more unemployment; to cure unemployment, a little more inflation. For high and accelerating inflation accompanied by high and accelerating unemployment, it had no explanation and no prescription.

For every policy target you need a policy tool, Bob Mundell instructed the diners at Michael I on Trinity Place in downtown Manhattan. To combat stagnation plus inflation, you needed two levers: tight money to curb inflation, and tax cuts to promote growth.

In a Keynesian world, of course, tight money would merely offset tax cuts; one would contract aggregate demand while the other expanded it. The key was that supply-side tax cuts provided stimulus not by expanding aggregate demand—"putting money into people's pockets"—

Mr. Bartley is the editor of the Wall Street Journal. *This essay is excerpted from his introduction to the new edition of* The Way the World Works, *by Jude Wanniski, to be published by Polyconomics in May.*

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but by stimulating supply, by increasing incentives to work and invest. Producing deficits by more spending would not work, and neither would tax "rebates" or other non-marginal tax cuts. The cuts had to be directed at the taxes that did the most to curb incentives, that is, at the highest marginal rates. Indeed, where marginal rates are the highest, as Art Laffer sketched on his famous napkin, a tax cut might actually produce more revenues.

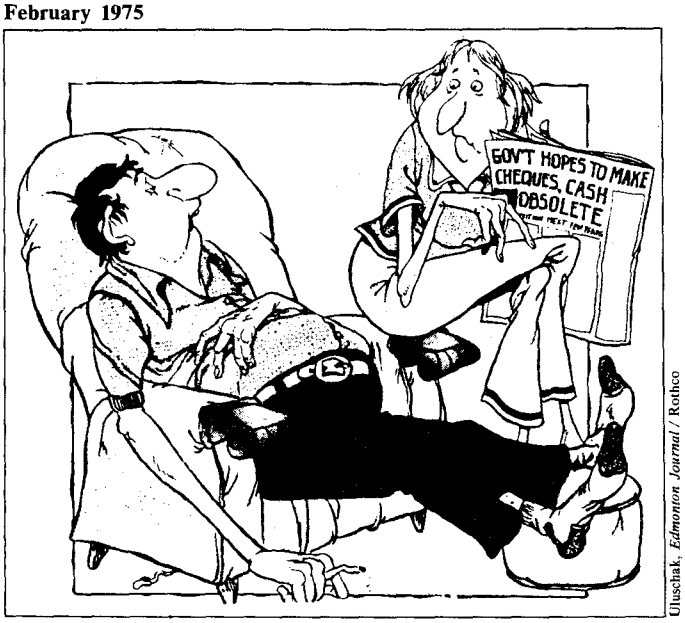
In the Mundell-Laffer world, the tight-money half of the prescription was also quite specific. Money-supply numbers told you little. For one thing, Mundell kept repeating, the only closed economy is the world economy. The national money supply means little when the demand for the dollar is global; a debate raged, and still smolders, over whether money creation takes place in the Eurodollar market. More broadly, monetary aggregates are useful guides only if the demand for money is stable or predictable, as monetarist theory assumes. This stability ended, as Mundell predicted it would, when President Nixon in 1971 tore the dollar from its golden anchor and allowed it to float in value against other currencies and commodities.

So to incorporate both the supply and the demand for money you need a measure priced by the marketplace: an index of sensitive commodity prices, for example, or simply the price of gold. And to adapt to the one-world economy, you need one world money, so that price signals can be accurately reflected and transmitted. A world unitary currency can be simulated by a system of fixed exchange rates. When the dollar and pound and peso and franc and D-mark and yen have definite values in relation to each other and to gold, global finance and commerce are based on one set of prices, unhampered by the confusion of constantly changing yardsticks.

By now, when we dismiss gasoline lines as quaint history, it's hard even to remember how foreign these intrinsically simple ideas seemed in a Keynesian-trained world. In 1976, Herbert Stein coined the phrase "supply-side fiscalists" as a pejorative; as I remember, the phrase first appeared in print in the *Wall Street Journal*. Jude, audaciously ignoring the intended negative connotation, quickly appropriated Stein's label, dropping the clumsy and misleading "fiscalists." Supply-side economics it was.

We only slowly came to understand that similar debates were going on in other cloisters. In Washington Norman Ture and Paul Craig Roberts developed the tax-incentive side of the model. They, like Jude, captured the attention of Representative Jack Kemp. Craig joined the congressional staff, where he worked with Kemp and others, and tilted with the Congressional Budget Office. He captured the congressional battles in his article "The Breakdown of the Keynesian Model" in *The Public Interest* of Summer 1978. As the *Journal* Op-Ed page provided a daily bulletin board for such ideas, other volunteers appeared. But to me, supply-side economics remained essentially the policy mix we had debated in those dinners and seminars in New York.

February 1975



Uluschak, *Edmonton Journal* / Rotheo

"I'm afraid inflation's beaten them to it."

On the monetary side of the model, a sliding dollar forced President Carter to appoint Paul Volcker chairman of the Federal Reserve in July 1979, and to give him his head on policy in October. The attempt to use monetary aggregates led to some policy confusions, with an initial burst of inflation. But when the gold price rocketed to a peak of $850 in February 1980, Volcker began tightening in earnest.

On the tax side, the Steiger Amendment quickly proved a success. Collections on long-term capital gains jumped to a record $10.6 billion in 1979, from $8.5 billion in 1978 (they maintained that level through the 1982 recession, and jumped to $16.5 billion in 1983, $20.1 billion in 1984, and $23.7 billion in 1985). The supply-side idea began to run rampant, with or without the Reagan campaign. In the waning days of 1980, the Senate passed a Kemp-Roth lookalike, and the House directed its conferees to accept it. In the wee hours of the morning, the conferees rejected it; "too big a deal," declared Chairman Russell Long.

So it fell to the Reagan Administration to enact supply-side tax cuts. When Mr. Reagan took office, marginal rates for the federal income tax reached 70 per cent on "unearned" income (which is to say, returns on savings and investment). As he left office, the highest rate in the tax code was 33 per cent in certain notches, dropping to 28 per cent at the highest level.

With these tax rates in place, the nation remains in the longest sustained peacetime economic recovery ever recorded. The double-digit inflation of the 1970s is only a memory. The economy's problem is not unemployment but a labor shortage. The "misery index" devised by the late Arthur Okun—unemployment plus inflation—shows a spectacular success, having fallen from nearly 20 per cent in 1980 to under 10 per cent in 1988. Perhaps the best way to encapsulate economic policy in the decade of the 1980s is to say that we have succeeded in checking an impending worldwide inflation without causing the world depression many would have predicted—a spectacular success by any historical standard.

For all this success, the ending of the Reagan Presidency was marked by a wide unease. Especially after the October 19 stock-market crash of 1987, the conventional wisdom is that six years of prosperity is only

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transitory, that some kind of economic disaster lies around the corner.

The first answer to this is Burke's "Men have no right to put the well-being of the present generation wholly out of the question. Perhaps the only moral trust with any certainty in our hands is the care of our own time." If some calamity does lie ahead, it is as likely to be the result not of old mistakes but of fresh ones. Yet the unease provokes comment on three areas: the 1982 recession, the problem of the deficit, and the remaining agenda of exchange rates.

Passage of the first Reagan tax cuts in 1981 was promptly followed by the 1982 recession, with a dip in government revenues and soaring deficits. In the debate over this bill, the Laffer curve came to be understood not merely as a truism that at some point raising marginal rates will reduce revenues, but as an assertion that any tax cut will always pay for itself immediately. Tax-cut opponents promoted this interpretation to ridicule the whole idea, and advocates promoted it to build support for a tax cut that politically had to deliver some benefit to lower-income people with lower marginal rates. As the recession took hold, opponents crowed that the Laffer curve and supply-side economics were forever refuted.

In fact, as the tax cuts passed, the consensus economic forecast was for a mild upturn, and only supply-siders were worried about 1982. In the inevitable congressional compromise, concern over the deficit resulted in a tax cut staggered over three years. And already enacted Social Security increases and bracket creep offset the first two *tranches* of rate reduction. The impending cuts actually created incentives to postpone income out of 1982. Moreover, with Volcker at the Fed, the tight-money side of the Mundell prescription was already firmly in place. This ground inflation out of the economy more rapidly than most thought possible, but there would be no net tax cut to offset tight money until 1983.

None of this, of course, prevented conventional wisdom from blaming the 1982 recession on deficits, tax cuts, and supply-siders. Especially so with the defection of OMB Director David Stockman, who announced $200-billion deficits as far as the eye could see. But if deficits and anticipation of deficits caused the 1982 recession, what caused the 1983 recovery?

As 1983 opened, the first headline in the editorial columns of the *Wall Street Journal* was "At Last, a Tax Cut." By then the conventional wisdom held that deficits doomed the economy to sluggish growth at best, but supply-siders were talking boom. Alan Reynolds of Jude Wanniski's Polyconomics hit the growth number on the head—6.5 per cent growth for the fourth quarter of 1983 over the fourth quarter of 1982.

This was the start of the recovery we still enjoyed as Ronald Reagan left office. Properly read, the record suggests that Mundell's two-pronged prescription worked. Inflation was conquered far more quickly than the conventional wisdom believed possible. And once tax cuts were actually applied, growth resumed and, helped by further marginal-rate reduction in 1986, continued for an unprecedented time. Taking any relative historical view, and recalling the actual economic conditions of 1978, this was a considerable achievement indeed.

NOW, A FEW REMARKS on the deficit, the twin deficits, Mr. Reagan's "riverboat gamble," and his "$200 billion in hot checks." To begin with, the deficit is a problem of spending, not of tax cuts. During the Reagan prosperity, government revenues grew smartly, along with the rest of the economy. As a percentage of GNP, tax revenues are about where they've been for decades, but spending has grown even faster.

In part, President Reagan's tolerance of deficits was a political calculation to fight the size-of-government issue on the tax side rather than the spending side. Republicans have of course preached the smaller-government gospel for years. But holding out the carrot of lower taxes only after spending cuts had been introduced left Republicans with the worst of both worlds; indeed, it left them repeatedly urging higher taxes to validate Democratic spending increases. Mr. Reagan cut this Gordian knot by putting tax cuts first and letting spenders worry about deficits.

On the evidence so far, the success of this strategy has been, if by no means complete, greater than usually understood. Under pressure of the deficit, spending as a percentage of GNP peaked in 1983 and showed a gradually declining trend for the remainder of the Reagan Presidency. There is, of course, reason to wonder what will happen in the Bush Administration, especially as we have watched drought-relief and catastrophic-illness bills roll through Congress with even the Reagan Administration's blessing. But the post-1983 trend does suggest that there is nothing at all wrong with the mathematics of President Bush's "flexible freeze." Moderate budget restraint will close the deficit; the only

December 1981

REAGANOMICS
We Have a LIFTOFF!!
See... I TOLD YOU IT WOULDN'T WORK! He Hasn't Reached HIS DESTINATION YET!!
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question is whether our current institutions allow it to be implemented politically.

For another thing, everyone talks about the federal deficit being the instrument of Keynesian fine tuning. But in measuring, say, supply and demand in the credit markets, much of the federal deficit is offset by the surplus in state- and local-government pension funds. Other nations measure not a federal deficit but a public-sector borrowing requirement, including all levels of government. When appropriate adjustments are made, as they regularly are by the OECD, the current U.S. deficit is not out of line with that of other industrial nations. The official federal deficit fell from 6.3 per cent of GNP in FY1983 to 3.2 per cent in FY1988, with no effect on the decibel level of the concern about it.

Finally, the deficit is measured on a cash basis, rather than on the basis of generally accepted accounting principles. Under GAAP accrual accounting, you would measure all future obligations undertaken, not merely those for which bonds have been issued. As it happens, Arthur Andersen & Co. has periodically undertaken to put the government's accounts on a GAAP basis. Its studies show a total deficit roughly twice that measured by the conventional measure, principally because the latter does not include the unfunded liabilities of the Social Security system. While the conventional deficit grew in the Reagan years, however, unfunded Social Security liabilities declined, and more of the spending was on long-lived assets such as aircraft carriers. The Andersen studies show that while the federal deficit grew to 5.2 per cent of GNP in 1984 from 2.9 per cent in 1980, over the same years the GAAP deficit fell to 9.3 per cent of GNP from 12.5 per cent. Under Reaganomics, the burden we are leaving to our grandchildren has not been mushrooming; it's been shrinking.

In a one-world economy, the trade deficit is merely an artifact of history. If comparable statistics were collected, Manhattan Island would be terrified by an astronomical trade deficit.

The federal deficit's "twin," the trade deficit, is of even less consequence. In a one-world economy, the trade deficit is merely an artifact of history—a reflection of where politics has drawn lines on a map. If comparable statistics were collected, Manhattan Island would be terrified by an astronomical trade deficit. For that matter, the trade deficit is also an artifact of economic fashion: a reflection of where economists currently choose to draw lines in a great circle of transactions. Once everything—goods, services, bonds, and so on—is included, the accounts must balance; for every buyer there has to be a seller.

This is scarcely to say there are no big problems in international economics, but they are rather the opposite of what the conventional wisdom believes. In its focus on the merchandise trade deficit, the conventional wisdom believes the tail wags the dog. In fact, a year's worth of world trade amounts to only about two weeks' worth of world capital movement.

The trade deficit first arose when the Reagan tax cuts stimulated the U.S. economy, making it the only growth opportunity in the world. This resulted in a tremendous net capital inflow; at the same time U.S. banks stopped exporting capital through Third World loans. With the capital accounts showing a huge surplus, a merchandise trade deficit was necessary to balance the equation. As inflation was brought to a sharp halt in the early 1980s, indeed, the U.S. trade deficit was probably the only thing standing between the world and a second Great Depression.

Still, of course, all cannot be well economically while interest rates remain at historically unprecedented levels even while inflation declines. Nor can all be well when the world's strongest economy imports capital instead of exporting it to developing nations where opportunities ought to be greater. The original prescription worked out at Michael I has an answer to these puzzles, for part of the agenda remains unfinished. In particular, the nations of the world are still trying to run one economy with a gamut of different moneys.

The seemingly arbitrary movement of exchange rates wipes out investments, closes and opens factories, and destroys and creates jobs throughout the world. No wonder interest rates are high; no wonder many people feel economically insecure; no wonder different nations toy with the poisonous nostrum of protectionism.

On the exchange-rate issue, the Reagan Administration reflected the conflicts among conservative economists who otherwise agree. Martin Feldstein, for example, advocated/predicted a lower dollar to balance the trade accounts. Milton Friedman, a powerful voice in any crowd, strongly believes in the positive virtues of floating exchange rates. On early indications, the Bush Administration will be no more inclined to a reform of the exchange-rate mechanism. Yet the power of events does seem to be pushing the world, both practically and intellectually, toward the kind of international monetary reform that Bob Mundell, Art Laffer, and Jude Wanniski talked about in the mid 1970s.

The international meetings of finance ministers and central bankers do, after all, represent a movement away from floating rates. In the Plaza agreement in September 1985, Treasury Secretary Baker acknowledged U.S. global responsibility for dollar policy, ending the long period of "benign neglect" of the dollar's international value. The G-5 nations agreed that the dollar was too strong. In the Louvre accord in February 1987, the expanded G-7 nations agreed its depreciation had gone too far, disrupting the world economy. And at the 1987 World Bank-IMF annual meeting, Treasury Secretary Baker, now Mr. Bush's Secretary of State, talked of an international economic policy based on "the relationship among our currencies and a basket of commodities, including gold."

WHAT, FINALLY, of the 1987 "crash"? The Wanniski explanation of the 1929 crash and Great Depression in *The Way the World Works* is the epitome of his original and controversial observations, and deserves an updating in the light of the events of October 1987. The '29 crash came, he argues, when political maneuvering in Washington made it apparent that the impending tariff

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would not after all be confined to agriculture. The Depression, in turn, was caused by the Smoot-Hawley tariff, the trade war that followed, and the Hoover tax increases wrongheadedly designed to calm Wall Street.

Skeptics argue that even if you persuade yourself that Jude has identified the politically crucial moment in the tariff debate, it seems a small event and a large crash. While Smoot-Hawley may have played a key role in the Great Depression, they see the 1929 crash as the bursting of a speculative bubble.

Perhaps. But with the "rational expectations" work on the stock market, we now understand much more acutely that markets anticipate events; a crash some months before the enactment of an economically catastrophic law is precisely what we would expect. And Jude's evidence consists not of one isolated incident but of a long string of coincidences.

Indeed "bubble" is scarcely an apt metaphor for the 1929-1930 stock fluctuations. Bubbles collapse, and the Dow Jones Industrials fell from 298 on October 28 to 230 on October 29 of 1929. But bubbles do not reinflate, as the Dow did to 294 the next April, after a November low of 198. Jude's comments on the 1929-1930 crash, at the very least, prove that what needs to be explained is not October 1929, but the drop from 294 (or 244 when Hoover announced he would sign the tariff), to 41 a few months before the election of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932.

In October 1987, the market crashed 500 points in one day. From the August high of 2,722 it fell to the October 19 low of 1,738, a total of 36 per cent. By comparison, from the 1929 high of 381 in September to the November low was a fall of 48 per cent. The 1987 collapse was more concentrated, probably because computers and global communications make speculation more efficient. But the real economy, at least to this writing, has rolled along unimpeded.

This bubble, if that is what it was, was certainly not punctured in a vacuum. The collapse came the week the Ways and Means Committee suddenly concocted a bill to stop the takeovers that had boosted the stock market. The arbitrage community collapsed overnight, with a decline in takeover stocks preceding the general debacle on the 19th.

Even more to the point, at least to anyone at Michael I, the collapse came in the context of a breakdown of the international monetary order. In mid October, the Louvre agreement was foundering as Treasury Secretary Baker and the Germans fought over whether the dollar should be defended by printing fewer dollars or more marks, whether the exchange rate should be defended by contracting or expanding world liquidity.

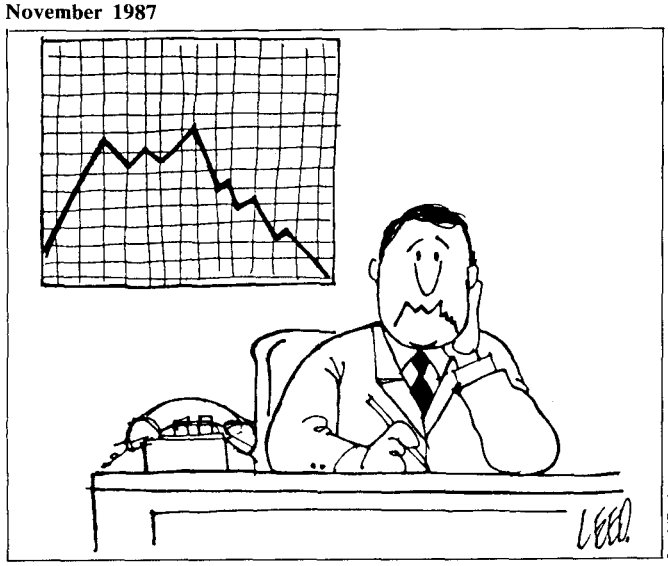
The crash on Monday followed Sunday's televised warning by Secretary Baker that "we will not sit back in this country and watch surplus countries jack up their interest rates and squeeze growth world wide on the expectation that the United States somehow will follow by raising its interest rates." On the same day, the *New York Times* carried a story asserting Treasury's willingness to see the dollar fall in its dispute with the Bundesbank. I'm convinced that the market-makers' eyes were glued to Secretary Baker's Sunday appearance; I know mine were.

We now understand that markets anticipate events; a crash some months before the enactment of an economically catastrophic law is precisely what we would expect.

A sense of crisis, I also know, dominated the financial markets through the rest of 1987. But the mood bottomed out with the advent of the new year. And as it happened, in the first week of January the world's central banks intervened massively in support of the dollar. The Louvre agreement was back in business. During 1988, the banks demonstrated an ability to control the dollar-mark rate, and to a lesser extent the dollar-yen rate. Stocks rose through the year, and the sense of crisis ebbed as the world economy prospered.

Why was the bursting of the 1929 "bubble" followed by a Great Depression, while the bursting of the 1987 "bubble" has, at least so far, had no impact on the real economy. Dumb luck, perhaps? Or perhaps it is because markets don't ordain but warn. And perhaps because in 1929, the crash panicked policy-makers into compounding their errors, while in 1987 policy-makers somehow got the message and corrected their errors. In trying to work both events into a coherent and useful model, so far as I can see, this mode of thought offers the only explanation on the table.

November 1987



Leed/Rothco

THE NEW PRESIDENT is not a supply-side firebrand. Rather, he is a man who once described these policies as "voodoo economics." But George Bush no longer talks that way; instead, it's "read my lips." And this victory is made more delicious by irony. In the tugging and pushing over the last tax cuts, Bill Steiger's capital-gains rate got shoved up to 28 per cent from the 20 per cent low it reached during the manic phase of Reagan supply-side thinking. George Bush wants to chop it back down; the President who coined the phrase "voodoo economics" says that will produce more revenue. □

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THE WRIGHT STUFF

Free plane rides, luxury yachts, and cold hard cash: all the perks a congressman's come to expect. But they're investigating Jim Wright anyway—for the peccadillos that cost thousands, not the 'poor judgment' that cost billions.

QUIS CUSTODIET?

R. CORT KIRKWOOD & TERENCE P. JEFFREY

NO ONE REALLY KNOWS how much the thrift-industry bailout is going to cost the taxpayers, and the House ethics committee isn't going to help us find out. Although Speaker Jim Wright is largely responsible for the extent of the current crisis, his key role in precipitating the crisis is not even on the ethics committee's agenda. But while the committee concentrates on the Speaker's book-publishing deal, it is worth taking a look at his part in the S&L debacle.

The latest in a long string of embarrassing revelations came from L. William Seidman, director of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), who recently told a group of journalists that Edwin Gray, former head of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board (FHLBB), told him at the time that he "felt threatened" by Wright. Gray (Seidman told the reporters) "would come and weep on my shoulder about what he was being asked to do" on behalf of Texas thrifts, which, according to this account, "went far beyond the normal representation" by a member of Congress. Wright's phone calls to Gray are well documented, and it is known that Fernand St Germain, an ally of Wright's, canceled testimony by other regulators in 1985 that would have made public both the extent of the crisis and its roots in gross mismanagement; circumstantial evidence suggests that St Germain did so at Wright's request. They also held up recapitalization of the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC) for nearly two years, leaving the regulators helpless to intervene while the S&L managers ran up billions in new debt. It took the House 18 months to *partially* grant the Reagan Administration's request to give the FHLBB the money that it needed to begin to cope with the crisis. And while the House fiddled, the minimum cost of a bailout rose from about $12 billion in July 1985 to at least $160 billion today.

Wright's loyalty to his friends in the Texas S&L industry was so steadfast that he even cold-bloodedly indulged in homophobia, a mortal sin in the liberal-Democratic lexicon. Paul Rodriguez of the *Washington Times* reported last month that Wright threatened several times in 1986 and 1987 to reveal the homosexuality of an FHLBB examiner unless board chairman Ed Gray fired the man and agreed to listen personally to the special pleading of Wright cronies.

Why would Wright engage in such distasteful activities? The reasons include the use of a luxury boat, free airplane rides, and cold hard cash.

THE CASH CAME from Thomas Gaubert, the bearded, cigar-chomping head of the deeply insolvent Independent American Savings and Loan, who also served as "finance co-chairman" of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) in the mid Eighties. Federal Election Commission records show that between 1983 and 1986, Tom Gaubert, his brother Jack, their wives, Barbara and Carolyn, and their children, Tom Jr., Michael, Paige, and Randy, dished out $147,000 to Democratic candidates for federal office. Key recipients included Senate Finance Committee Chairman Lloyd Bentsen, Housing Banking Committee Chairman St Germain, DCCC Chairman Tony Coelho, and of course Jim Wright, who was Majority Leader at the time. Tom, Jack, Tom Jr., and Michael told the FEC that their employer was Independent American, while Barbara and Carolyn said they were housewives, and Paige and Randy listed themselves as students. Back in November 1985, the 19-year-old Michael did so well as an employee at Independent American that he was able to generously hand over $7,000 to "The Jim Wright Appreciation Fund" in connection with "Jim Wright's Good Ole Cowtown Jamboree." Now a student at SMU, Michael has refused to comment on his astounding success in the thrift industry.

Gaubert also set up East Texas First PAC to help finance the special election of Representative Jim Chapman in August 1985—the PAC donated $100,920 to Chapman's campaign. This January, three Texas thrift executives were indicted for conspiracy: they were accused of funneling bank funds to PACs such as East Texas First by coordinating employee donations and reimbursing them with pay raises and phony travel expenses. Meanwhile, Chapman, normally a conservative Democrat, has been known to switch his vote at Wright's request—most publicly in sup-

Messrs. Kirkwood and Jeffrey are editorialists for the Washington Times, *covering the thrift industry and Jim Wright respectively.*

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port of Wright's 1987 tax-increase bill. (Wright's enforcer, John Mack, virtually dragged Chapman back to the floor to change his vote. See *NR*, Jan. 22, 1988.)

Another Texas thrift operator whom Wright tried to protect from Gray's troops was Don Dixon, head of Vernon Savings & Loan. Dixon's corporate plane was always at the disposal of Wright and other lawmakers; Wright's deputy chief of staff, Phil Duncan, told the *Washington Times* in 1987 that the Speaker never knew whose plane he was on, or who was paying for his ride—but, strangely, Wright always knew where to find the plane and where it was going. Dixon also docked his thrift's multimillion-dollar yacht, *High Spirits*, where it would do the most good: on the Potomac a few blocks from Capitol Hill, where Democratic fundraisers used it *gratis*. In June 1987, after *American Banker* reported Dixon's largesse, the DCCC retroactively paid for the yacht charters and plane trips by sending $48,150 to FSLIC, which had finally put Dixon's thrift into receivership, confiscating its "assets"—including a loan portfolio with a 96 per cent default line.

To the ethics committee, however, Wright's S&L antics probably won't seem like anything more than good old-fashioned constituent service slightly skewed by a bout of "poor judgment." If Wright goes down, it won't be for manipulating federal banking policy in exchange for support of the Democratic Party, but for violating a few specific House rules, including:

—*Dodging outside-income restrictions:* Wright sold most of the twenty thousand copies of *Reflections of a Public Man* in bulk quantities, to lobbyists, labor unions, corporations, and "personal friends." Executives of the New England Life Insurance Company have admitted they spent $2,000 on copies because the Speaker's office told them to buy the book instead of paying an honorarium. Wright pocketed $55,000 in royalties in 1985 and in 1986 while closely approaching the honorarium ceiling both years.

—*Filing incomplete financial disclosures:* In 1979, Wright and his wife formed a partnership (Mallightco) with Texas developer George Mallick and his wife. Until last March, Wright refused to list the underlying assets of the partnership as required by the 1978 Ethics in Government Act. When he finally amended his statements, they revealed that one of the partnership's principal activities was buying and selling rough gemstones—the value of which is intrinsically uncertain until they are cut. The possibility that he sold gemstones under arrangements similar to his book sales is still under investigation.

—*Accepting illegal gratuities:* Congressmen are not allowed to accept gifts totaling more than $100 in a calendar year "directly or indirectly, from any person with a direct interest in legislation before Congress." While the favors Wright received from S&L managers apparently don't come under this rubric, the Mallick partnership may. Mallick was also a partner in a Fort Worth development project to which Wright tried to steer nearly $30 million in federal grants (from a fund targeted to benefit the poor). And Mallick gave Wright the use of a Fort Worth apartment from 1979 to 1985; after the arrangement was uncovered, Wright moved to a luxury condo owned by the Mallicks, paying $21 a night when he and his wife stayed there.

—*His relationship to William Carlos Moore:* Moore has done far more than just print and "market" *Reflections*. In a carefully prepared public response to the ethics charges last June, Wright mentions payments—which he is not required to disclose under pre-1975 ethics laws—to Moore for "extensive" services performed during his 1974 campaign. Mark Johnson, a spokesman for the Speaker, now contradicts that public statement by claiming that these payments were *reimbursements* for expenses incurred doing volunteer work. In any case, during that 1974 campaign, Moore was a full-time federal staffer on the National Water Quality Commission. Moore resigned from that job on March 26, 1975, the day he was sentenced to six months for tax evasion—time he might not have had to serve if he had been willing to tell federal investigators the names of the recipients of money from a political slush fund he operated on behalf of Teamster boss Jimmy Hoffa. In September 1976, after leaving jail, Moore incorporated his Fort Worth publishing company. Since then, Wright has paid him almost $700,000 in campaign funds.

It's strange that these relatively minor infractions, which probably have only cost the taxpayer a million here or there, constitute matter for investigation by the ethics committee, whereas the S&L mess will not—but that's the way Capitol Hill works today. The *Wall Street Journal*'s Brooks Jackson calls it *Honest Graft* in his new book on the subject. In February, Jackson revealed that 163 thrift-industry PACs sent nearly $4.5 milion to congressmen on the banking committees in the last three elections. The men who accepted the money, Democrat and Republican alike, write the rules by which the thrift industry operates.

Al Capone was finally brought to book, not for murder or racketeering, but on the relatively minor charge of tax evasion. If Jim Wright falls from his high office—second in line to succeed the President—it will be for infractions of House ethics rules, rather than for playing the Hill game and costing the taxpayers billions. □

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AFGHAN SITZKRIEG

FOR A HUNDRED Pakistani rupees ($5) one can enter a sweepstakes competition at the American Club in Peshawar. The pot will go to the person who comes closest to picking the date of the fall of Kabul to the *mujahedin*, the fall being defined as the day of the first guerrilla broadcast from the capital (that is, if the equipment has not all been smashed up by then). Most entries were for dates in February and March, a proof of how badly American diplomats, journalists, and aid workers, the usual patrons of the club, misjudged the situation. A guerrilla assault on Kabul, as I said in my dispatch last issue, is not imminent.

"We cannot move before the snows melt," said Mullah Ezat in his camp on the outskirts of Kabul. He is Jamiat-e-Islami's chief commander in the area, with about six hundred men. "And before assaulting Kabul we will liberate an adjacent province first so that civilians can be evacuated. We must organize a unified military command of all the parties around Kabul, and our political work has only just started. God willing, we will coordinate our attack with a rebellion inside."

On paper, the regime is still far stronger than the guerrillas. Well over a hundred thousand reasonably well-equipped men carry arms for it in its various military and paramilitary services. They have the advantage of being entrenched around main population centers and can call on the support of air force and heavy artillery. But how many will *really* fight? "Up to five thousand," an American information officer in Pakistan told me. "Maybe as many as 400,000 in all of Afghanistan?" estimated Mullah Ezat.

A young man named Nasaruddin, wearing a heavy felt shirt, quilted Soviet trousers, and an Afghan army cap, sat on a rug sipping tea and smiling at me while answering Mullah Ezat's questions. He did not look like a man on the most dangerous mission of his life. He was a member of KhAD—the KGB-trained Afghan police, which is supposed to be the most loyal cadre of the Afghan Communist regime. Nasaruddin had brought his secrets to the guerrilla camp in broad daylight, on the pretext of visiting his family in Kabul. Had one guerrilla been a government agent, Nasaruddin would have been a dead man, but he seemed unconcerned for his safety—the best proof I had that the guerrillas had won the intelligence game. On a chosen night he is to knife his fellow guard and, God willing, the guerrillas will thus take the position without a fight.

Nasaruddin is 18 years old and had been drafted into KhAD only a month before, straight from high school in Kabul. I met other defectors from the regime, including some who had been drafted into the army in a street roundup in Kabul, and a few who had been captured as guerrillas and were forced into the army after serving a part of their sentence at the notorious Pul-i-Charki jail. With such loyal defenders of the revolution, it is no surprise that the regime has turned to a new practice: posts and garrisons are manned simultaneously by KhAD, army, Communist militia, and military police, whose members watch over one another. So much for the unity of the Afghan nation in defending socialism. Nevertheless, Nasaruddin reported that the KhAD officers remain fanatical and will fight to the last.

But we don't know how many such men there are because even assuming that the guerrillas only want to kill a few thousand collaborators, it is the number of people who subjectively feel themselves threatened by punishment and revenge that defines the category. Many diehards of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) no doubt appreciate that the game is up for them but will fight to the last if they find no refuge abroad. The best the Soviet Union could do now to bring peace to Afghanistan would be to lift its hamstrung clients out of Kabul to some collectivist paradise on the Black Sea or Cuba, but that looks unlikely. Given that there are at least several thousand zealots prepared to fight, and with a thug as intelligent and ruthless as Najibullah at their head, the regime looks set to put up a fight to the finish.

Can the guerrillas break their resolution? To draw an inexact but illuminating parallel, let's remember that it took two years and a major offensive with tanks, heavy artillery, and hundreds of thousands of disciplined troops before the Vietcong conquered South Vietnam after the withdrawal of American combat troops. The Afghan guerrillas are not a disciplined conventional army and they possess no armor or air force. Their greatest asset is the hatred ordinary Afghans feel toward the Communist regime, which they hold responsible for a decade of revolution, purges, and war. But will hatred be enough to win?

THE MAJORITY of the inhabitants of Kabul are refugees from the fighting in other provinces of Afghanistan, and are hostile to the Communist regime. Guerrilla sympathizers inside Kabul are certainly capable of sabotage attacks, but more important would be guerrilla agents inside the regime's own institutions. Commanders such as Husein Anwari or Abdul Haq clearly do have their spies high in the Communist hierarchy. Ahmad Shah Massoud, who operates possibly the largest network, last year encouraged the defection of President Najibullah's own brother. However, the crucial question is whether the sympathizers of the different commanders can be made to stage a concerted rebellion. In short, whether or not Kabul can be taken by treachery depends on whether or

Mr. Sikorski is NR*'s roving correspondent.*

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not the guerrillas can overcome their personal, tribal, linguistic, sectarian, and ideological divisions.

The guerrillas stress that unity is essential for their success in taking the capital, but the commanders around Kabul, like the émigré leaders in Pakistan, all have different ideas of the form in which their unity should be expressed. Mullah Ezat, for example, is a member of Ahmad Shah Massoud's Supervisory Council of the North, the most impressive political and military organization in Afghanistan, and wants the commanders of his own party, the largely Persian-speaking Jamiat-e-Islami, to constitute themselves into a council ruling around Kabul, a council that would then invite the commanders of all other guerrilla parties to join it. But other parties in the area, particularly the Pushtun Hezb-e-Islami of Unis Khales, resist such schemes.

I witnessed a meeting between Mullah Ezat and an important commander of Afghanistan's Shia minority—Said Husein Anwari of the Hazara Harakat-i-Islami. Anwari's relations with the largely Tajik Jamiat seem cordial, and are certainly better than the relations between Tajiks or Hazaras and any of the Pushtun guerrilla parties. Before the war both the Tajiks and the Hazaras had been disadvantaged minorities, but they have now created fighting forces more competent than those of the hitherto politically dominant Pushtuns. If Pushtun leaders are slow to recognize the new ethnic and military correlation of forces in Afghanistan and do not adapt themselves to their relatively diminished political weight, a civil war is likely. Afghanistan's minorities will cooperate in resisting the return to the *status quo ante*. Thus the ethnic battle lines for the domination of Afghan politics are already drawn. If the bickering is not kept in abeyance until the Communist regime—the common enemy—has been finished off, then the taking of Kabul may yet be a long and bloody business.

INSOFAR AS WE can affect events in Afghanistan at all, we want the Soviet-backed PDPA regime to fall, and fall soon. This is in our interest first so that the Soviet Union is *seen* to have been deprived of the fruits of war. After all if, because we suddenly cut aid to the guerrillas while the Soviets supplied their clients in plenty, the Communists were to hold on to power, the Soviet Union would have achieved its aim—a client Communist regime in Kabul. Secondly, although Afghanistan is not *in itself* a strategically important country—it is too weak to threaten anybody—we have a vital interest in denying its territory to the Soviet Union as a possible future invasion route. We can recognize that the Soviet Union has legitimate security interests in Afghanistan (with which it shares a border) while we continue the policy of supporting the anti-Communist guerrillas. Only a non-aligned Afghan regime can stifle Soviet meddling in this region bordering on Iran and the Gulf. And the faster the *mujahedin* win, the sooner will Afghan refugees begin departing from Pakistani territory, which would help the stability of our major ally in the region.

American support for the Afghan insurgents has been a brilliant foreign-policy success, perhaps the greatest success of the decade. When all the hype of international summits is forgotten, U.S. help in preventing the enslavement of a nation will be remembered as President Reagan's greatest achievement. But there is no policy that cannot turn a triumph into a disaster by continuing beyond its usefulness. "Genius," as Bismarck defined it, "is knowing where to stop."

At the time of the signing of the Geneva accords on Afghanistan, Moscow rejected the American proposal for mutual and simultaneous scaling down of the superpowers' aid to their respective Afghan allies, instead agreeing informally to "positive symmetry," whereby both sides could continue sending supplies. There are signs now that Moscow may be changing its mind, and would after all accept "negative symmetry." If we can ensure that the reductions are verifiable, we should welcome this. Provided we do not abandon the guerrillas entirely—the supplies of Stingers, for example, should be kept up so that the regime cannot widely re-deploy helicopter gunships—I am convinced that the proportional scaling down of supplies to both sides would benefit the *mujahedin*. Let's remember that throughout the war it was those areas furthest away from the sources of foreign supplies—the provinces bordering on the Soviet Union—that bore the brunt of the fighting and fought best. In my experience, the fewer foreign supplies a group receives the more effective it is. The *mujahedin*'s best weapon is having their countrymen on their side.

"If there are two things in the world I hate most," the ex-Marine Jack Thompson sighed as we sat on a roof watching shells fired by the Najibullah forces exploding amid civilian-occupied houses, "they must both be Commies," and it was difficult not to agree with him. In his previous wars—three years in Vietnam, nine in Rhodesia, plus freelancing for Ollie North—he had "popped" at least a hundred of them, but for now he had to be satisfied with having test-fired a Kalakov, the modern Soviet assault rifle. That evening, with a loud sizzle ripping through the air, scattering heavy chunks of frozen ground, one medium shell fell into our garden near a well where we had been washing ten minutes previously. Several guerrillas stood on a porch three yards away from the point of impact. By then behind a wall, Jack and I might not have been killed, but the others would have had no chance. Allah be praised for Soviet engineering! It was a dud. □

Ken Hyman

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PROFSCAM

A HARD-WORKING reporter, Charles J. Sykes, has published an extraordinary book about higher education in America. The book is *Profscam*, subtitled *Professors and the Demise of Higher Education*. Mr. Sykes demonstrates with abundant evidence that teaching, actual teaching, has been negatively rewarded in the period since World War II. Hours spent with students do not advance a professor's career. Grantsmanship does. High prestige in the academic profession correlates with a low teaching "load." What counts is "research," which is often fraudulent. Molière would have written well about the academic comedy known as "citation." The professors "cite" each other in their "research," and a score card is kept administratively on the number of times a professor is "cited." Of course there is a lively racket in citations: you cite me, and I'll cite you.

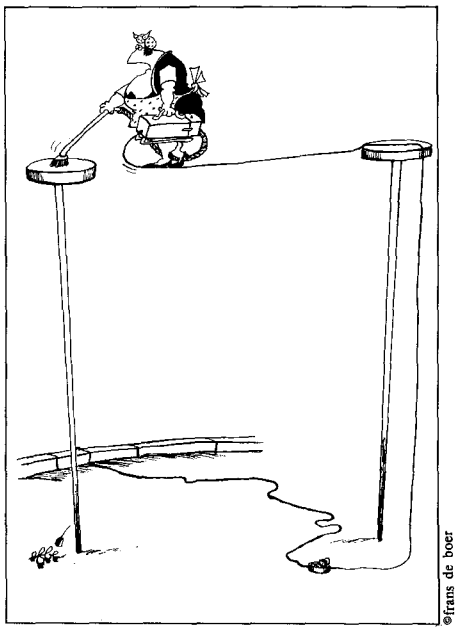
In order to accommodate all this "research," a forest of academic journals has grow up, the function of which is to provide space for articles that will add to the professors' bibliographies. Mr. Sykes estimates, in my opinion accurately, that less than 10 per cent of this research material adds anything at all to the sum of human knowledge. Furthermore, no one can read all of it. College administrators, in effect, simply weigh it by the pound when deciding on promotions and pay raises.

But what is happening to "education"? "Since 1970, the number of English majors has dropped by 57 per cent, philosophy majors declined by 42 per cent, and majors in modern languages were cut in half." The National Endowment for the Humanities has noted with alarm that students can obtain degrees from nearly three-fourths of American universities without ever studying American literature or history, and concluded darkly that "too many students are graduating from American colleges and universities lacking even the most rudimentary knowledge about the history, literature, art, and philosophical foundations of their nation and civilization."

The thrill of Mr. Sykes's book resides in its relentless specificity. "Houston Baker, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, argues that choosing between authors like Virginia Woolf and Pearl Buck is 'no different from choosing between a hoagy and a pizza.' " How about that for intellectual style?

And Professor Robert Scholes rejects the notion that Homer, Plato, Dante, and Shakespeare are especially valuable. For him there are no "sacred texts." Notice the professor's pejorative use of the term "sacred." One would have to consider carefully that word in connection with these "texts." Perhaps they really *are* "sacred." But, at a minimum, they are good writing.

Professor E. D. Hirsch, whose *Cultural Literacy* made a brief splash, has cleansed himself with his academic peers by denying that a student needs actual knowledge. To be culturally literate, Hirsch says, "one does not need to know any specific literary texts"—



a student ought to know who Romeo and Juliet were, but does not need to read the play. The professor actually says that the *Cliffs Notes* are good enough. Buzz off, Shakespeare.

This kind of intellectual nihilism has received serious institutional reinforcement. The Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum of the College English Association has handed down a dictum denying that English literature is a subject requiring students to know the work of any particular author, such as Milton, Donne, Shakespeare, or Marlowe. "The undergraduate curriculum should not be defined as a body of knowledge about literature," said this committee. It added that not treating literature as an "object" allowed the teacher to recognize "the multiple contexts which our students actually use in their experience of reading."

WHAT THESE academicians appear to be saying is that literature has no objective status, that a spray-paint slogan on a wall has equal status with Dante on Paolo and Francesca or Shakespeare on Falstaff or Homer on Achilles. "The meanest graffito," says Professor Scholes, "can be a treasure of human expressiveness."

Yeah? "*Arma virumque cano*" . . . "Good-night, sweet prince, And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!" . . . "O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon" . . . "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death" . . . "Let us go, then, you and I" . . . "Christ's blood streamed in the firmament" . . . "In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains . . ."

All of those words are hard created facts. The academic barbarians cannot defeat them. Indeed, they will be defeated by them, and sooner than they think. □

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THE OLD PRETENDER WHEN YOUNG

John O'Sullivan

Harold Macmillan: Volume I: 1894-1956, by Alistair Horne (Viking, 537 pp., $24.95)

To judge by outward appearances, Harold Macmillan was a Tory grandee direct from central casting. His patrician looks, his languid Edwardian manners, his cynical wit, and his famous "unflappability"—he calmly read Aeschylus while wounded and under fire in no man's land in the 1914-18 war and, forty years later, dismissed the resignation of his entire Treasury team as "a little local difficulty"—all combined to make him seem a figure of supreme self-confidence and of no great relevance to the postwar world of the welfare state. The American public got a glimpse of this polished performer when, responding to Khrushchev banging his shoe at the UN, he delivered the adroit parliamentary putdown: "May I have a translation of that?" It was the Perfect Squelch.

It was not, however, the inner man. As he emerges from this first volume of Alistair Horne's highly readable biography, Harold Macmillan was a politician of thoroughly modern ruthlessness and a deeply religious, acutely sensitive, even neurotic, personality. The story of his life until he entered Downing Street revolves around the question: How—and why—did Macmillan construct this protective shell of Edwardianism about himself?

Cherchez la femme. There were only two women in Macmillan's life, his mother and his wife, both deadly in their different ways. His mother was a Hoosier, a tough, driving ambitious woman who married a shy, retiring man and thereafter invested her ambitions in her talented third son. Her patronage was generous but exacting. She manipulated family arrangements so that Harold inherited virtually all the estate, but she also pushed him firmly along a road of ambition that *she* had mapped out for him. Thus she directed the sensitive adolescent away from an early interest in "high" Anglo-Catholicism. No doubt her vigorous Midwestern Protestantism had something to do with this intervention, but, as Mr. Horne speculates, so probably did her belief that Catholicism would be an obstacle to her son's career.

Macmillan continued to flirt with Catholicism at Oxford, but he never "poped." He became instead that rare bird, a deeply religious Anglican, saying many years later, "If you don't pray every night, and if you don't believe in God, and if you don't think you can serve God eventually, you can't solve all these problems and you can't even survive them . . . When you give up religion, you give up any kind of idealism." Is it unreasonable to see his denominational resting-place as a compromise between his own instincts and his mother's determined influence?

For Macmillan never lost the feeling that this strong woman was monitoring his progress in life. At the height of the Suez crisis, long after her death, he visited the church where she had worshipped in Spencer, Indiana, and read the lesson: "I found it rather difficult to get through, without breaking down," he later wrote in his diary, "and I really felt that my mother was there watching us and enjoying the satisfaction of so many of her hopes and ambitions for me."

But, like many sensitive souls for whom action is a pleasant distraction from the agonies of introspection, Macmillan was a born warrior. He used family influence to get sent to the front in 1914—dying for their country is the one thing the British upper classes do really well—and was wounded four times. His bravery was genuinely legendary: the phrase "as brave as Mr. Macmillan" was current in his regiment.

Thus he returned to civilian life with both his reputation and his self-confidence immeasurably increased. Before long, he had established himself in the family firm, married a duke's daughter, and been elected to Parliament. He enjoyed several years of

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domestic happiness and professional achievement. Then in 1930 his life fell comprehensively apart.

His wife, Lady Dorothy, embarked on an affair with the raffish Tory MP Robert Boothby, which lasted until her death in 1966. Mr. Horne's is the first full account of this affair—one in which everybody was a victim except Lady Dorothy, who appears as a monster of selfishness. The four Macmillan children, one of whom was in fact Boothby's daughter, became alcoholics. Boothby himself tried to form other permanent attachments but his attempts were frustrated by Lady Dorothy, who on one occasion flew to Venice to break things up. Macmillan, who loved his wife deeply, suffered a nervous breakdown and may even have attempted suicide. Astonishingly, the marriage remained socially intact—Lady Dorothy, ironically, was an excellent "political wife"—but normal conjugal relations ceased shortly after the affair with Boothby began, and Macmillan faced a cheerless domestic life for many years thereafter. Nor, apparently, did he seek consolation elsewhere.

The marriage by the end had settled down to a relaxed affection (though one may doubt that contentment at being married to the prime minister altogether reflected credit on Lady Dorothy). But the cost at the time was heavy. Although the affair was never mentioned by the press, everyone in London society was aware of it. A man as sensitive as Macmillan would have felt that he was the subject of prurient and mocking gossip every time that he entered a room. "The shallow mask of manners" he then assumed multiplied over the years into the droll Edwardian masks of prime minister, world statesman, and Grand Old Man.

Macmillan's personal loneliness at this time was made worse by his political isolation. He was that most despised of political animals, the unglamorous rebel. Churchill was warning the nation of the threat from Hitler. Anthony Eden was standing up to Mussolini. Macmillan supported both, but he was principally known for writing dull, verbose books and pamphlets like *The Middle Way* (i.e., between socialism and capitalism), advocating economic planning, state ownership, import controls, and Keynesian fiscal stimulation. This belief in a sort of half-hearted socialism was one of the two constant principles that animated his political life. To borrow A. J. Balfour's description of Gladstone, the domestic Macmillan was "a Tory in everything except essentials."

Mr. Horne sees this as farsighted because semi-socialism is what the British subsequently got—thanks partly to Macmillan himself, who as an opposition leader, helped push his party toward a policy of industrial interventionism. As prime minister he introduced price and wage controls and "indicative planning." Yet this policy produced not economic revival, but further decline and stagnation. It was not until the Thatcher government began to dismantle Macmillan's legacy of the Middle Way that the British economy embarked on the sustained recovery that is now in its eighth year.

Even in the 1930s, Macmillan's turgid volume was a dull-dog sort of heresy to his fellow Tory backbenchers. As the decade came to an end, his career in the Tory Party seemed hopeless. He may even have flirted with the idea of joining Labour.

Again, a war came to his assistance. As a leading anti-appeaser, he received from Churchill in 1943 the important post of resident minister in the Mediterranean. At last he was playing in a high political game, reconciling the frequent disputes between de Gaulle and both Churchill and Roosevelt, negotiating the surrender of the Italian government, defeating the Communist *Putsch* in Greece, above all attempting to protect British interests in relations with a new and more powerful ally, the United States.

Between 1940 and 1947, America took over Britain's role in the world as the principal great power concerned to defend freedom. Inevitably this transfer produced tensions: resentment on the British side, impatience on the American. It is probably fortunate the two nations were fighting a war as allies for most of that time. Macmillan himself adapted quickly to Britain's reduced circumstances: her future role was to be an influential subordinate to America, "the Greeks in the Roman Empire." There was a distinct limit to British influence on U.S. policy, as Macmillan was to discover at Suez. But this "special relationship" between the two English-speaking countries became the second animating principle of his political life. He threw himself

RANDOM NOTES

☐ More April Titles: *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (Random House, $24.95), by Stanley Karnow—author of *Vietnam: A History*—makes a case for the relative benignity of American imperialism in the island archipelago, although he does compare the Spanish-American War to the Vietnam War for its supposed inhumanities and the degradation it produced among the American troops. . . . In *Observing the Nixon Years: "Notes and Comments" from* The New Yorker *on the Vietnam War and the Watergate Crisis, 1969-1975* (Pantheon, $19.95), by Jonathan Schell and with a preface by William Shawn, the author—himself a contributor to the magazine of origin—recreates a monster running amok in monstrous times, as witnessed through the perfervid imagination of *The New Yorker*. . . . *Berkeley at War: The 1960s* (Oxford, $24.95), by W. J. Rorabaugh, is an interesting but overly sympathetic history that employs as its touchstone the notion that the Berkeley revolutionists were justified in their central belief that power can be made to flow from the bottom toward the top. (In an essay in their new book, *Destructive Generation*, Peter Collier and David Horowitz have a brilliant chapter on Berkeley that argues just the reverse.)

☐ Coming in May: In *The Long Road to Freedom: Russia and Glasnost* (Scribner's, $21.95), Walter Laqueur suggests that springtime in the Soviet Union may already have blossomed—to give way, not to summer, but to a premature and chilly fall. What Gorbachev means by "democracy," Laqueur believes, is actually enlightened dictatorship by a single party; meanwhile, the forces of old-fashioned Russian nationalism are regathering strength in opposition to modernism, liberalism, urbanism, Judaism, and other, traditional, objects of dislike.

For years Joseph Blotner's huge biography of William Faulkner seemed sufficient unto a day many more years hence. Then, two years ago, Stephen B. Oates published his appalling *Faulkner: The Man and the Artist*. Now Frederick R. Karl, author of a biography of Joseph Conrad and a study of the modernist aesthetic, weighs in with a new biography as big as or bigger than Blotner's unreduced one: *William Faulkner: American Writer* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, $35). We haven't seen it, but it's going to be something to look at. —CW

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In 1977, the House of Representatives voted to allow television coverage of its proceedings. Bob Rosencrans was then president of a large cable company known as UA-Columbia. The idea of creating a public affairs network on cable to televise Congress was being widely discussed. It seemed like a risky proposal to many industry leaders. Nevertheless, Bob believed the time was right for the cable television industry to demonstrate its commitment to public service.

The son of Russian and Austrian immigrants, Bob Rosencrans grew up in New York during the New Deal and World War II. "We were a very idealistic family," he recalls. So much so that his own idealism endured despite the loss of his older brother in combat. Since then, he says, "I still look for the better side of people."

While many saw the value of a public affairs network, Bob and his business associate, Ken Gunter, were ready to move ahead. Together they made the initial contribution to start C-SPAN. What better gift, they asked, could this growing private industry make to the American people than live gavel-to-gavel coverage of the United States Congress?

Mr. Rosencrans' contribution proved to be only the first step as other cable industry leaders soon followed suit. The result was enough seed money to enable cable's public affairs channel to launch successfully, with Bob Rosencrans as its first chairman.

Today, thanks to Bob Rosencrans' continuing efforts, C-SPAN has become a true cable cooperative, enthusiastically supported by another idealistic family—40 of the industry's top companies.

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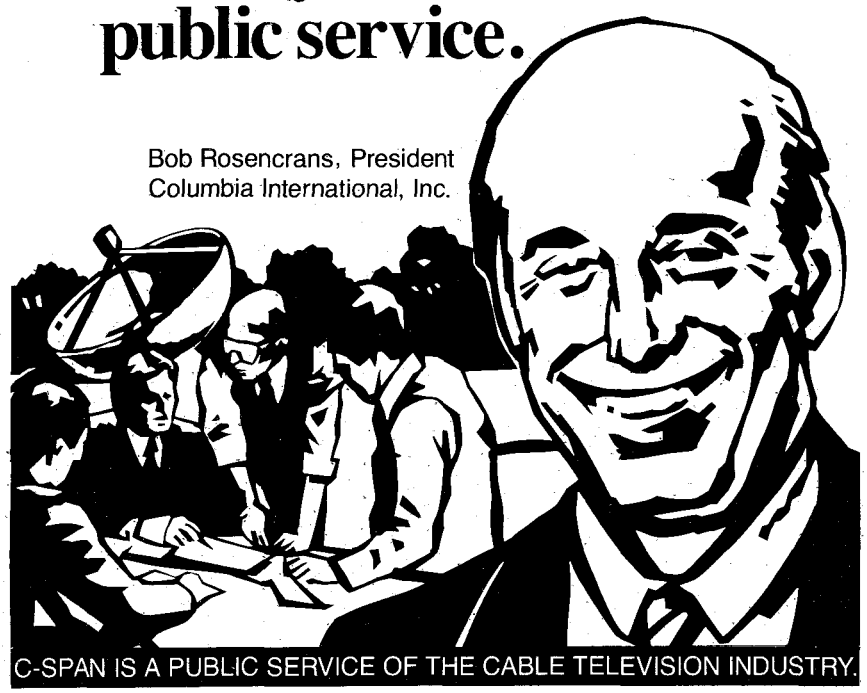
Bob Rosencrans, President
Columbia International, Inc.



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into making it work in the Mediterranean theater with zest, wholeheartedness, and almost total success. Mr. Horne's accounts of Anglo-American (and other) political battles provide the most gripping chapters of this volume.

Macmillan emerged from the war with renewed confidence and the status of a political heavyweight. He rose over the next ten years to hold the highest posts in the British government: chancellor of the exchequer, foreign secretary, and finally prime minister. As he rose, the mask hardened around the man. Richard Crossman, a Labour MP and former subordinate on Macmillan's staff in Algiers who admired him greatly, was baffled by the change: "The studied Edwardian elegance of his dispatch-box manner, the mannered witticisms, and the whole style of professional party polemics which he so consciously adopted—everything about him disconcerted."

But what was going on behind the mask? Did he have any fixed political principles? Mr. Horne's quotations from Macmillan's diary reveal that some of the ideals most trumpeted by him were in fact discarded lightly at crucial moments. Only his beliefs in state interventionism and the U.S.-British link recur consistently throughout his career. In particular, whenever Britain's European connections clashed with the "special relationship," as in the 1961 Polaris deal with President Kennedy at Bermuda, Macmillan chose America.

Suez is, paradoxically, the best example. The most important political friendship of Macmillan's life was with Dwight D. Eisenhower. So why did the two men meet for forty minutes at a delicate stage in the Suez crisis (when a clear indication of U.S. opposition might have held France and England back) and not discuss it beyond a few generalities? The best guess is that each was presuming on the other's friendship, Macmillan to obtain U.S. acquiescence in the Anglo-French operation, Eisenhower to obtain restraint. Each thought the other had given his assent. Macmillan returned to London advising military action on the grounds that America's objections would be pro forma. When in fact Eisenhower, feeling betrayed, reacted by orchestrating a run on the pound and threatening oil sanctions, Macmillan turned smartly about-face and counseled with-

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drawal. He was, in Harold Wilson's wounding phrase, "first in, first out."

There are only two plausible explanations for this reversal. The first, which fits all we know of his career, is that Macmillan thought that no possible gain from Suez could compensate for the loss of close Anglo-American friendship. His first act as prime minister, after all, was to repair the breach with Ike. The second is that Macmillan advised Eden to invade Egypt knowing that U.S. opposition would halt the operation, bring Eden down, and place Macmillan himself in line for 10 Downing Street. He was perhaps ruthless enough for such a maneuver. But could anyone have foreseen the actual chain of events with such accuracy? And if he had had the necessary degree of foresight, would he not have disguised better than he did his own role in promoting the fiasco?

What can be said, as he himself claimed, is that he seized the opportunity of the premiership once it presented itself. He ruthlessly elbowed aside his rival, "Rab" Butler, by presenting Butler's loyally restrained opposition to Suez as a mark of weakness, and his own somersault as an act of hard-headed realism. And he won the crown.

Mr. Horne ends this volume with his hero on the threshold of Number Ten. Ahead of him lies a remarkable rollercoaster of reputation. Expected by many political commentators to last in power a mere three weeks, he went on to win a triumphant landslide election victory two years later and to serve seven years in all as prime minister. At the end of his premiership, this faithful husband who prayed daily left office in near disgrace when the press linked his administration to a number of sexual and intelligence scandals. In the 23 years that remained to him, he first saw his star rise as the failure of succeeding British governments cast a favorable light on his own government's record. Then, in the 1980s, the success of Mrs. Thatcher's robust, unapologetic conservatism made his own Middle Way seem just another step down in the recent history of British decline. And as his historical reputation hung in the balance, his last few years were clouded by allegations that, against orders, he had conspired to send White Russian and Yugoslav POWs to certain death at the hands of Stalin and Tito.

Such extreme allegations, which Mr. Horne puts to flight in this book, were painful but perhaps not as disabling as once they might have been. For by the end the sensitive intellectual had become the Grand Old Man he had imitated so well for so long. But that is another volume. Scribble, scribble, scribble, Mr. Horne. □

FOOD FOR OBSESSIVES

Andrew Ferguson

From: The President: Richard Nixon's Secret Files, edited by Bruce Oudes (Harper & Row, 661 pp., $22.50)

THIS COMPILATION of memos from the Nixon White House is already a best-seller among the Nixon-obsessed, who will be poring over it, collecting further evidence of the famous Nixonian weirdness. They won't be disappointed. Indeed, even the unobsessed cannot help being intermittently fascinated by the question: Just how weird *was* Richard Nixon?

We've all heard the tales—unproved and (since the source was Woodward and Bernstein) probably untrue—of how our 37th President prowled the White House corridors late at night, engaging the portraits of his predecessors in vigorous debate. We know by his own admission that, even after a few beers in the Florida sunshine, Nixon never let his best friend, Bebe Rebozo, call him anything but Mr. President. And it is a matter of public record that wage and price controls were his idea. All of which is suggestive evidence, but not conclusive. Certainly the former President cannot be ranked with such all-time American loons as, say, Henry Wallace, or Michael Jackson.

Bruce Oudes, editor of *From: The President: Richard Nixon's Secret Files*, seems to want to bump Nixon's ranking up a bit. (In his dust-jacket autobiography, Oudes brags that he holds multiple degrees from a journalism school—the kind of boast that may itself be a sign of advanced crankery.) Oudes's method is to present the memos he's collected—only a fraction of which were written by Nixon—in strict chronological order and with virtually no editorial comment. Thus unfamiliar names rise and fall without being identified; obscure events that triggered memos are never explained. Questions are asked to which we never get answers, and just as often we get answers without knowing what the question was. This method, or nonmethod, is disorienting and, more important, sheds no light on the notorious scheming and conniving of Nixon and his henchmen. In refusing to provide context for his material, Oudes makes the White House look weirder than it probably was. It's rather like watching an overwrought man scream into a telephone: is there really someone on the other end of the line, or does the fellow think he's yelling at his dead Aunt Martha?

A memo from Pat Buchanan, for example, reads, in its entirety: "Say it ain't so." Another, from Chuck Colson to H. R. Haldeman—"Re: Attached Article"—reads, in part: "I have reason to suspect that the attached comes from the same source as the previous hatchet jobs . . . I am not paranoid as you think I am; there is some justification in my concluding that someone is working very hard to do me in." Maybe so. But since Oudes doesn't tell us what Colson is talking about, it's difficult to judge.

This is not, however, to say that the collection is without its rewards. Lurking in this 661-page slab of pulp is a fascinating book of about 250 pages: in every third memo or so, the reader finds something gossipy, or historically revealing, or witty, or pithy. "Why not have the USIA start the damndest [*sic*] ideological offensive against the Soviets they have ever seen," writes Buchanan to the President early in the

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Administration. "The American propaganda organs in my own simplistic view ought to pour the heat on them in every area of the world—then we might haul Dobrynin in and tell them that if they stop telling all these lies about us—we'll stop telling the truth about them."

Equally satisfying is the occasional moment of historical irony, such as when Chuck Colson writes to Buchanan, just weeks before George McGovern's thrashing at the polls in 1972: "The line building in the liberal media is that McGovern's going to be soundly defeated because of his own ineptness. . . . Note what Mary McGrory has been doing. She has been eviscerating McGovern personally. The liberal media cannot possibly allow this election to be interpreted as the plebiscite that it is." Hear the echo? Change "McGovern" to "Dukakis," and these words could have been written for Election Day 1988, when Miss McGrory, her cause all but lost, once again turned on the left-wing standard-bearer and scolded him for his incompetence in the art of populist seduction.

Along with Mary McGrory, many other celebs, major and minor, make cameo appearances in the memos: Gina Lollabrigida, Frank Sinatra ("Tell him not to play golf with the Vice President," advises Colson), Pat Boone, Sammy Davis Jr., Bob Hope. And a couple of pages are devoted to what may have been the weirdest event of the Nixon Presidency: the uninvited appearance at the White House of the King himself, Elvis Presley.

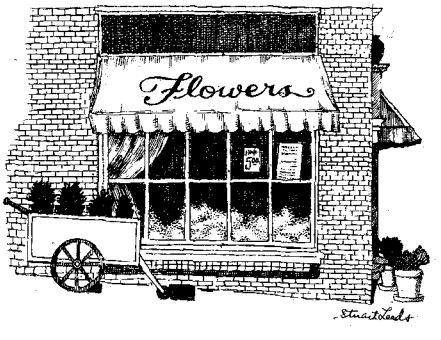
"As you are aware," a panicked Dwight Chapin writes to Haldeman, "Presley showed up here this morning and has requested an appointment with the President." The arrival of the puffy, slightly addled pop star was enough to overload the circuits of even the iciest of Nixon's PR pros. But the confusion was quickly overcome, second thoughts were dismissed —"it would be wrong to push Presley off on the Vice President"—and the historic meeting ensued. Bud Krogh's record of the occasion is a model of bureaucratic circumspection and understatement, but it suggests that the clash of matter and anti-matter was so intense that even the President succumbed to brainlock (which was by that point something of a permanent condition for the King):

> Presley indicated that he had been playing Las Vegas and the President indicated that he was aware of how difficult it is to perform in Las Vegas. . . . The President mentioned that . . . it was important for Presley to retain his credibility. . . . Presley indicated in a very emotional manner that he was "on your side." . . . The President indicated again his concern that Presley retain his credibility. At the conclusion of the meeting, Presley . . . in a surprising, spontaneous gesture, put his left arm around the President and hugged him. . . . the President . . . mentioned his concern for Presley's credibility.

One memo in particular rises above Oudes's careless and desultory editing to achieve a kind of poignancy. In 1971, Nixon attended a humiliating White House correspondents' dinner, and his memo, written the next day while the wounds were still fresh, instructs Haldeman that

> under absolutely no circumstances will I attend any more dinners of this type in the future. . . . The reporters receiving the awards were way-out left-wingers. I had to sit there for twenty minutes while the drunken audience laughed in derision as the award citations were read . . . I don't want any of our naïve staff members to give you the impression that as a result of my going there . . . I thereby proved that I was a "good sport" and therefore may have softened some of the press attitude toward the President. On the contrary . . . the press corps have nothing but contempt for those who get down to their level and who accept such treatment without striking back. . . . We must remember that they are just waiting for the chance to stick the knife in deep and to twist it.

Exactly right. For holding such attitudes, Nixon was called "paranoid," but I commend his advice to any Republican President who wishes to establish kinder and gentler relations with his adversaries in the federal city. After all, three years after writing these words—which he never stuck to—Richard Nixon was dead meat. His memos reveal that he never forgot a lesson many Republicans have yet to learn: Even paranoids have enemies. □



BAD GUYS

Joseph Sobran

Intellectuals, by Paul Johnson (Harper & Row, 385 pp., $22.50)

INTELLECTUALS is a book for people for whom "intellectuals" is already a dirty word. Paul Johnson offers case studies of 12 outstanding men of the mind who in private life were pretty nasty numbers: Rousseau, Shelley, Marx, Ibsen, Tolstoi, Hemingway, Brecht, Bertrand Russell, Sartre, Edmund Wilson, Victor Gollancz, and Lillian Hellman. The final chapter glances at Cyril Connolly, Norman Mailer, Kenneth Tynan, James Baldwin, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, and Noam Chomsky.

What do all these people have in common? I'm still wondering. They vary enormously in their ideas, interests, stature, and sins. Johnson never really explains what Tolstoi and Miss Hellman are doing in the same book. It seems odd to call Hemingway an intellectual, though he was a genius. If the common denominator is simply celebrity in the intellectual world, why is Gollancz included?

The real focal point of the book seems to be Johnson's attitude toward his subjects: fascinated disapproval. Most of them are "progressives" whose own lives were hardly advertisements for their ideas; none could be called "reactionary." But it's hard to say whether Johnson disapproves of them because they don't live up to their own ideals, or because they do.

Nearly all of them created misery around them, especially in their treatment of the opposite sex; but this isn't the special prerogative of intellectuals. Hemingway was a terror, but this has nothing to do with his talent or his opinions: he got drunk a lot, and preferred the company of toadies who would put up with almost anything. Rousseau, Shelley, and Brecht were monsters of self-promotion, cynicism, ingratitude, and the heartless use of

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others; the same might be said of certain rock stars. Ibsen was rude and cold, but he never seems to have done anything he could be arrested or even divorced for.

"Intellectuals," in short, is a bogus category. Johnson nevertheless moralizes freely about them—"This is typical of intellectuals"; "it is a characteristic of such intellectuals"; etc.—as if his peculiar selection of a dozen or so people he dislikes constituted some sort of inductive demonstration. It doesn't. I have no affection for any of his targets, and he persuades me that most of them are as despicable as he thinks they are. But this proves nothing about "intellectuals."

The book has its virtues. Johnson writes with zest, and he provides excellent gossip. As in other and better books, he has a sure sense of what the reader already knows and supplies an endless stream of piquant facts few readers do know. Heaven knows this book is not boring.

But it is monotonous, in that Johnson's attitude of censure rarely lets up and eventually makes these disparate people sound more alike than they are. He is Will Durant with a beadle's whip. He dwells on his subjects' sexual sins, sometimes beyond the call of duty, so that his criticism of Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* applies to his own book: "It is written with extraordinary skill to appeal both to the prurient interest of readers . . . and to their sense of morality."

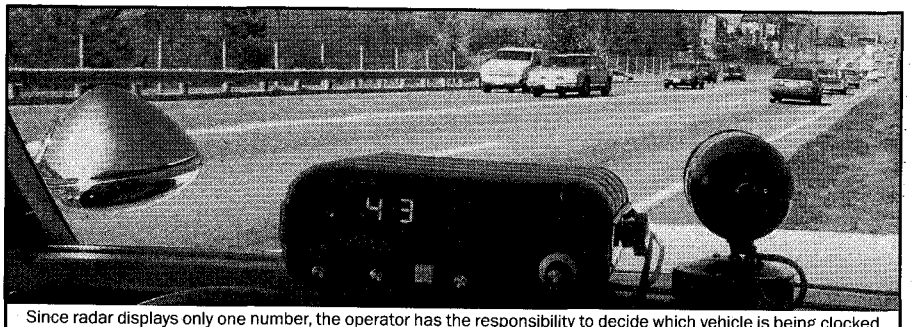
Johnson is shrewd about his subjects' shrewdness: all of them knew their audience, and even their most "daring" ideas were pitched with great skill at a receptive public, while seeming to defy the powers that be. Insofar as he is debunking the pretensions of cultural icons who posed as iconoclasts, he is very good.

But he doesn't stop there. There is something wrong with a writer who arouses in me the impulse to defend Lillian Hellman. Bitch, slut, liar, tyrant, crypto-Communist, self-deluded fool, yes. But is it fair to pile on the rumor that she once made herself the prize in a poker game? Does the inductive method require such detail? Doesn't the beadle's arm ever weary?

On the East Coast, she was the queen of radical chic and the most important single power-broker among the progressive intelligentsia and the society people who seethed round them. Indeed in the New York of the 1970s she dispensed the same kind of power which Sartre had wielded in Paris, 1945-55. She promoted and selected key committees. She compiled her own blacklists and had them enforced by scores of servile intellectual flunkies. The big names of New York radicalism scurried to do her bidding. Part of her power sprang from the fear she inspired. She knew how to make herself unpleasant, in public or in private.

And so on. Sounds awful, but such characters could probably be found among people whose politics Johnson shares. Noam Chomsky is dragged in solely for his detestable radical views, with no evidence—apart from the very fact that he appears in this book—that his personal life is in any way defective. Mentioning him in this context seems unfair.

"What conclusions should be drawn? Readers will judge for themselves." All this moralism, and no moral! Except



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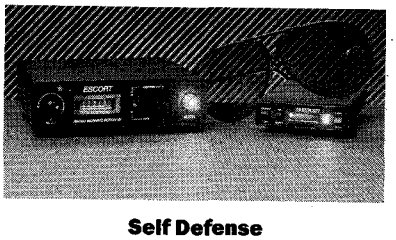

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this: "Beware intellectuals." Yes, yes, but how do we *spot* 'em? Johnson's bag is mixed, but not mixed enough. He should have complicated it with a few unpleasant "right-wingers." If he couldn't find them, he wasn't really looking. □

PAYMENT IN FULL

Carol Iannone

Partial Payments: Essays on Writers and Their Lives, by Joseph Epstein (Norton, 429 pp., $18.95)

NOWADAYS, WHILE CRITICS in the professional arena indulge in feverish overestimation, those in the academy busy themselves with the deconstruction of all literary value whatsoever. Meanwhile, a precious handful of writers—among whom Joseph Epstein is surely the foremost—are engaged in what might be called the reconstruction of our literary culture, or what Epstein himself has termed the Resistance. In his two alliteratively entitled collections, *Plausible Prejudices* and now *Partial Payments*, Epstein works both to deflate inflated reputations and to uncover genuine achievements that have been overlooked or undervalued, or looked at and valued for the wrong reasons. Moreover, with the pieces he writes as editor of *The American Scholar*, Epstein has revived the familiar essay, whose very form bespeaks a kind of intelligence, discrimination, cultivation, and taste that have not been conspicuous in recent decades. And both his critical and familiar essays are literary achievements in their own right—translucently readable, often deliciously amused and amusing, studded with choice nuggets from their author's wide and varied reading. The voice is totally his own, both genial and astringent, honest, unhurried, subtle.

The keynote essay in *Partial Payments* is an appreciation of the now-unfashionable Matthew Arnold, whose belief in the "interconnectedness" of "literary, moral, and spiritual values" makes him an important figure to the Resistance. Arnold's insistence "that nothing was quite so important as literature and that literature was never to be treated as an end in itself" runs bracingly counter to academic critics who have managed to depreciate literature both by placing it on the same level as popular culture and by making contemporary criticism—with its arcane theories of structuralism, semiotics, and deconstructionism—an inaccessible, self-enclosed exercise in game-playing.

Another target of Epstein's Resistance is modernism, or at least the excesses of modernism resulting from the belief that literature must be difficult, tormented, and bleak. Thus Epstein commends to our highbrow attention certain writers whom critics nursed on the haughty premises of modernism might well disdain—Barbara Pym, Max Beerbohm, Philip Larkin ("the poet for the nonprofessional"), Somerset Maugham (in an essay pointedly titled "Is It All Right to Read Somerset Maugham?"). Epstein argues that the work of these writers yields modest but sure rewards: sheer reading enjoyment, style, humor, common sense, insight into human nature, "plain and powerful truth-telling." In Epstein's hands these authors become antidotes to the "modern taste" for "geniuses who appear as wounded personalities, maniacally obsessed, psychologically crippled." Take his presentation of Max Beerbohm, for example. To get a picture of Beerbohm, Epstein instructs:

> One might imagine D. H. Lawrence . . . Recall his passionateness—his passion, so to say, for passion itself—his darkness, his gloom. Think back to his appeal to the primary instincts, his personal messianism, his refusal to deal with anything smaller than capital-"D" Destiny. Do not neglect his humorlessness, his distaste for all that otherwise passes for being civilized, his blood theories and manifold roiling hatreds. Have you, then, D. H. Lawrence firmly in mind? Splendid. Now reverse all Lawrence's qualities and you will have a fair beginning notion of Max Beerbohm.

The kind of stiflingly ordered society against which modernism rebelled no longer exists, of course (if it ever did), and Epstein is right to challenge the persistence of gratuitous unconventionality and outscale rage as literary values. Even a crabby, tortured figure like Evelyn Waugh, who could in some ways be termed a modernist, earns Epstein's appreciation for the way his "pain and terror" alchemize into "joy and laughter for his readers."

All this is by no means to make Epstein sound like some kind of predictable conventionalist. He never overestimates his modest writers, and he is capable of a gentle, generous assessment of an avant-gardist like Jorge Luis Borges. Tom Wolfe, for all the page-turning excitement and satisfyingly funny scrutiny of liberal pieties in *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, misses "the truth of the human heart." And the luminous Anton Chekhov is one case, Epstein exquisitely judges, where the absence of "a coherent world view" keeps even so excellent a writer out of the very first rank.

But in general Epstein has shamelessly brought back into the critical vocabulary certain straightforward concepts previously banished as hopelessly antiquated. His one foray into children's literature, a shining essay on John R. Tunis, lauds the boys' books by that writer for their artful representation of such old-fashioned notions as the importance of character, discipline, perseverance, and learning from defeat. And the underappreciated French novelist Marguerite Yourcenar, a major figure for Epstein, reminds us of "the difficulty of life and its heroic possibilities."

Yet another aspect of Epstein's remedy for the decline of literary culture is his rejection of current political orthodoxies. In an assessment that would anger "those sentimentally aligned with the fate of Third World countries," Epstein argues that V. S. Naipaul, "far and away the most talented, the most truthful, the most honorable writer of his generation," has seen "these newly independent peoples conned, ill-used, and generally diminished by their own would-be leaders, and others with their own special agendas." Epstein can appreciate the wisdom and style evident in the novels of E. M. Forster but questions the value of "their paeans and pleas for the life of the instincts" in a world grown sadder from the eruptions of the counterculture.

Epstein is the kind of critic you can agree with even when you don't; the grounds upon which he discusses literature are so fertile that even if you dissent from individual judgments, you can savor what's behind them. On the question of "ultimate meaning" in literature, however, Epstein is a bit puzzling, implying as he does that "ulti-

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mate questions about the meaning of life" can sometimes be part of the problem in literary excess. He seems especially drawn to figures who deny any sense of the transcendent, from his favorite essayist, H. L. Mencken, to Theodore Dreiser, for whom Epstein claims the status of America's greatest novelist. Yet, no matter how much some may advise against it, men and women will continue to ask such questions, and literature, if it is to have the "central place in the strivings of men" that Epstein wants for it, will have to try to answer them. But if literature does indeed resume that "central place," it will owe at least a partial payment to Joseph Epstein. □

UNCLE ANTON

Aram Bakshian Jr.

Chekhov: A Spirit Set Free, by V. S. Pritchett (Random House, 235 pp., $17.95)

To the casual or sentimental tourist, the Russian literary and historical landscape seems dominated by tragedy on an epic scale: whole volumes have been written about the "Slavic soul." Actually, as the last five centuries of Russian history amply illustrate, the Slavic tone owes at least as much to farce as to tragedy. There is a strong strain of the absurd in everything from the surreal, pathological criminality of Ivan the Terrible and Stalin to the spiritual vaporings of the aging Tolstoi (and, to a lesser extent, of the once-heroic Solzhenitsyn) sentimentalizing about a lost Russian past which, in reality, had always been dominated by a lower-case orthodoxy of the most rigid and nasty sort.

No one sensed this element of the ridiculous more clearly than Anton Chekhov. As his latest biographer, England's venerable V. S. Pritchett, points out in recounting an exchange between Chekhov and the bombastic impresario of the Moscow Art Theater, Konstantin Stanislavsky, on the premiere of Chekhov's last play, *The Cherry Orchard*: "There was only one jarring note: Stanislavsky had called the play 'a great tragedy.' Tartly . . . Chekhov replied that it was not even a drama —'It is a farce.' "

With his affectionate but penetrating eye, Chekhov, who had experienced the reality of Russian life at more levels than had most of the more comfortable members of the Russian intelligentsia and the aristocracy, saw through the illusions of both the cultural Right and the cultural Left. After his last meeting with Tolstoi, Chekhov reluctantly concluded: "Old men have always been prone to see the end of the world, and have always declared that morality was degenerating to the uttermost point, and that Art was growing shallow and wearing thin, that people were growing feebler . . ." In a prophetic letter written at the height of the Dreyfus affair, Chekhov decried the fact that "a brew has been gradually concocted on the basis of anti-Semitism, a principle reeking of the slaughterhouse. When something is wrong with us we seek the cause outside ourselves . . . capitalism, the Masons, the Syndicate, the Jesuits—all phantoms, but how they do relieve our anxieties!" Seeing through the shallow seriousness of many of his contemporaries, Chekhov realized that "pharisaism, stupidity, and tyranny reign not only in shopkeepers' homes and in lock-ups alone: I see them in science, in literature, in the younger generation." His only hatreds were "lying, and violence, whatever form they may take," and this is what gives nearly all of his writing the ring of truth.

It is not surprising that a man who so clearly recognized the delusions of his fellow human beings could write about them in his fictional works with such perception and edge. What is surprising, and perhaps most endearing, about Chekhov is the irrepressible sympathy he shows for his characters despite it all. He was that priceless rarity, a kindly critic, and in Pritchett he has found a kindred spirit. By concentrating on Chekhov's writing, and by studying his life primarily as a source of his art, Pritchett gives us a clearer and deeper understanding of both than even the most scrupulously —not to say tediously—detailed scholarly biography could.

Born poor and a peasant—the descendant of serfs—Chekhov struggled to become first a doctor, then a journalist, and finally, and triumphantly, a man of letters. He combined a Russian soul with a universal intellect, able to plumb the depths of his ethnicity without drowning in them. In the 44 years allotted him, he created a heroic body of work, most of which reads as well today as it did at the turn of the century.

As death approached, his devoted wife, the actress Olga Knipper, asked him the sort of "profound" question that people who spend too much time on the stage and too little time thinking still delight in. What, she implored, is the meaning of life? That, answered Chekhov, is like asking what a carrot is: "A carrot is a carrot and nothing more is known." Yet, →

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NINETY-FIVE YEARS AGO, replying to the English historian Charles H. Pearson's pessimistic *National Life and Character: A Forecast*, Theodore Roosevelt, the arch-optimist, wrote:

> The Greek rulers of Bactria were ultimately absorbed and vanished, as probably the English rulers of India will someday in the future . . . themselves be absorbed and vanish. In Africa south of the Zambesi . . . there may remain white States, although even these States will surely contain a large colored population, always threatening to swamp the whites. . . . It is almost impossible that they will not in the end succeed in throwing off the yoke of the European outsiders, though this end may be, and we hope it will be, many centuries distant. . . . it is impossible for the dominant races of the temperate zones ever bodily to displace the people of the tropics.

Eighty-seven years later, a less successful aspirant to the U.S. Presidency, Eugene McCarthy, retained the scenario but reversed the roles when, in the Summer 1981 number of *Policy Review*, he discussed the challenge to North American civilization posed by the "neocolonialist" attitudes of immigrants of non-European stock to the United States: a development that TR would have had to strain to envision.

Today, by contrast, the following declarative sentences—from *Ethnic Conflicts Abroad: Clues to America's Future*? (American Immigration Control Foundation, Water Street, P.O. Box 525, Monterey, Va. 24465; $4), a monograph by Glaister A. and Evelyn E. Elmer—seem merely to state a commonplace: "Although America's apparent decline obviously has multiple causation, a factor of overriding importance is that its ethnically mixed population no longer rallies around common values to the extent necessary for successful attacks on internal and external problems. . . . No one cause of American institutional disarray is more important than ethnic conflict, whether over cultural dominance or over political and economic power." Considerably less commonplace, in this era of squeamish, dishonest contentiousness, is the Elmers' conclusion that the contemporary social and political ideal founded on notions of "pluralism," the "melting pot," "multiculturalism," and "rainbow coalitions" is a delusion based on a sentimental International House concept of the fraternity of peoples. The truth, so Mr. and Mrs. Elmer argue, is otherwise, and it is attested to by both history and sociobiology:

> The abstract goals of ethnic groups are remarkably consistent everywhere. Each tends to strive for a high degree of control of its own destiny and to seek dominance over other ethnic groups, or at least to avoid dominance by them. A common and related goal is relative ethnic homogeneity within a defined territory. *This desire may be less acute for a dominant group with an assured status in a ranked system than for the constantly uneasy rivals in an unranked system.* [My italics.] Tactics used to pursue these goals depend somewhat on such factors as the number and relative sizes of competing groups, the existing institutional restraints, and the total cultural context.

From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, examples of ethnic strife and violence abound, as do they in the United States; where, paradoxically, they are perhaps the most deplored and, at the same time, ignored, since to recognize them for what they are is to undercut one of America's most ingrained myths. James Fallows has pointed to the U.S. as an oddity among the world's nations, owing to its theoretical belief that a society can be "enriched" by absorbing huge numbers of immigrants of every identifiable background and culture—*pace* nearly every other of the world's societies, which apparently "think this can't be done, and that it's a bad idea to try." And so, in the Elmers' words, "American immigration policy, official and de facto, is based on an almost Orwellian reversal of traditional views . . . In some recent periods, the destination of half of the world's total immigration stream has been the United States."

The results, foreseeable from the continuation of this flow of emigrants to America, might itself have been extrapolated from an earlier, pamphlet-sized extrapolation: *Miami Today—the U.S. Tomorrow* (American Immigration Control Foundation, $3), by John Ney, recently reprinted seven years after its original appearance. Ney's heart and brain are in the right place, but his work is jejune and badly written, corrupted by Menckenisms which no adult writer after Mencken has ever been able to employ without sounding like a perennial adolescent. (Ney attacks his "boobs"—from HLM's *Boobus americanus*—for not comprehending the immense social, cultural, and political damage done the U.S. by improperly controlled immigration, as if tens of millions of these "boobs" have not made their opposition to congressional irresponsibility egregiously plain to every national pollster who has queried them about the problem.) His conclusion, nevertheless, is in agreement with the Elmers' findings: "In Miami, for the first time in American history, a foreign culture and a foreign language have come to dominate a major American city. . . . The Hispanic culture will not integrate with the American where large numbers [of people] are involved."

For the future, the Elmers see, in the absence of active measures taken to prevent them, the following developments: 1) an unremitting increase in ethnic tensions in America; 2) a heightening of the ethnic elements in American politics, leading eventually perhaps to regional segregation of the nation's ethnic components and possible separationist movements; 3) a preoccupation with internal conflicts and loyalties of origin sufficient to prevent Washington from devising and adhering to "principled and consistent foreign policies," with all that that entails in the way of our further deterioration as a world power; and 4) the gradual transformation of the United States from a First World nation into a Third World one. *Ten Steps to Secure America's Borders* (Federation for American Immigration Reform, 1666 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20009; $5) provides timely reading. For its detailed descriptions of hotspots along the Southwest border, I plan to carry it with me this year on an extended investigation of the proceeding rollback of the American frontier. □

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→ thanks to Chekhov, we have learned a great deal more about "life," a few precious drops at a time.

Chekhov died serenely, shortly after sipping a last glass of champagne. But the genuine grief that followed his death mingled with a strong element of farce. His coffin was transported to Moscow in a goods wagon marked "FRESH OYSTERS," and his funeral procession collided with that of a now-forgotten Czarist warrior, General Keller. Some of Chekhov's mourners mistakenly followed the military band of the martial cortège, causing Maksim Gorky to fume that this "is how we treat our great writers." Chekhov would have been amused. As no one knew better than he, that is how life's ambiguities and absurdities treat us all, one way or another. □

MUSIC

A TIME FOR MOZART

John Ardoin

ANYTIME IS a time for Mozart—whether to listen to him or to think about him. In his splendid biography of the composer, W. J. Turner put it best: "When you are a child, Mozart speaks to you as a child . . . but when you are a man, you find to your astonishment, that this music that seemed childlike, is completely adult and mature. At every age, this pure, pellucid day, this intangible transparency, awaits you and envelops you in its unruffled light."

So pervasive and evergreen is the appeal of Mozart's music that I doubt we could ever have too much of this one good thing, even in this year and the next as the music world revs up for 1991, when it will mark the bicentennial of the composer's death. And yet, ahead lies a flood of Mozartiana that will test everyone's endurance.

New York's Lincoln Center, for example, has announced that instead of the "Mostly Mozart" series it normally runs every summer, it will, over the course of a year and a half, offer *all* of Mozart. The Center's 11 constituent organizations—including the Chamber Music and Film Societies, the New York City Opera and Ballet, and the Juilliard School—will for the first time cooperate on a single project: the performance of every note we have by "the little man from Salzburg." For the statistically minded, this means 369 orchestral works, 92 religious and dramatic pieces, 30 major works for solo piano, 97 chamber-music opuses, and 227 miscellaneous scores—songs, canons, concert arias, violin sonatas, and so forth. The marathon will begin on Mozart's 235th birthday, January 27, 1991, and run through August 1992. And the Lincoln Center commemorative, while the most ambitious so far to be planned, is just the *Schlag* on the cake. It is hard to imagine an orchestral, operatic, or recital series anywhere in the world that won't be serving up a generous helping of Mozart.

How his status has risen in the music world from a century ago, when he was regarded as "the Raphael of music," a dainty salon composer, scarcely more than a tinkling eighteenth-century music box! It is hard for us today to realize that only a handful of his symphonies and concertos were heard with any regularity at the turn of the century. When the Met revived *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 1939, the opera was considered a novelty; it had been out of the company's repertory for 21 years. But then, *Così Fan Tutte* vanished from the Met's stage for 23 years and *Don Giovanni* for 21 years.

It was an iconoclastic, witty, cultured conductor of Shavian sensibilities—Sir Thomas Beecham—who more than anyone else convinced large audiences of Mozart's greatness by taking him out of the drawing room, with

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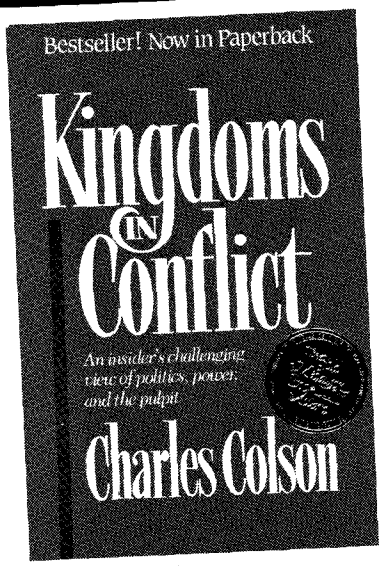
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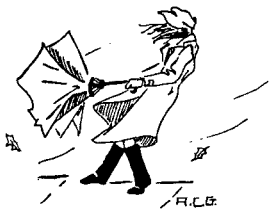
his silk pants and powdered wig, and putting him on horseback in riding breeches and boots. He humanized Mozart and filled his always song-laden phrases with previously unexpected sinew and full-bodied theater.

"How I had to plug this little fellow," Beecham was fond of saying. And it wasn't just the music itself that Beecham plugged, but the way in which he felt the music should be performed. Not for Beecham a scaled-down, anemic orchestra. Instead, he employed a complete string choir and frequently doubled winds for stronger sonorities. It must have been a German economist, Sir Thomas contended, who dreamed up the notion of "ideal Mozart," which made it excusable for concert managers and opera directors to save money by reducing ensembles and hiring small voices for small fees.



Little by little, however, an awareness of Mozart's supremacy began to permeate musical opinion during the twentieth century, bringing with it an appreciation of the fact that he had produced the finest of operas; that he had forged the symphony, concerto, and string quartet as we know these forms today; that he had written sacred music that was deeply spiritual, as well as lighter pieces that were disarmingly secular.

To Beecham, Mozart was "the central pivotal point in the music of Europe," the man who built "the bridge . . . between the old world of music and the modern world of music." This accomplishment above all is what we will celebrate a year and a half hence when performers will be playing, singing, and dancing Mozart, writers will be commenting on his music, a deluge of new recordings will be released, and symposia will delve into every nook and cranny of his compositions and personality.

There is bound to be a great deal said as well about Mozart's early death at the age of 35, now documented in a mesmerizing new book by H. C. Robbins Landon, *1791: Mozart's Last Year*. But to me the ultimate tragedy was not Mozart's burial in a pauper's grave, but the fact that fate decreed he must live his life *knowing* he was Mozart, acutely aware of his own worth, yet at the same time forced to watch men he knew to be inferior in talent become wealthy and receive important honors while he spent his days scrambling to make ends meet. This, plus the question of talent *versus* genius, is the premise of Peter Schaffer's play *Amadeus*, in which Mozart's penetrating self-awareness is shared by his chief rival, the Viennese court composer Antonio Salieri. "Tonight in an inn somewhere in this city," Salieri tells the audience, "stands a giggling child who can put on paper, without actually setting down his billiard cue, casual notes which turn my most considered notes into lifeless scratches."

That child—first a pretty, adored prodigy, petted and indulged by Europe's nobility, and later a plain, pock-marked musician, struggling to be accepted—was a beautiful duckling who grew up to be an ugly swan. He was "a complicated man with a complicated personality and an unprecedented knack for making enemies," as Harold Schonberg has put it. Still, Haydn was able to tell Mozart's father: "Your son is the greatest composer I know either personally or by reputation."

A friend of mine once said he is certain that when he gets to heaven he will find Beethoven on God's right hand and Bach on his left. I asked him where that left Mozart. With a smile he replied, "Why, in God's lap, of course." □

DELECTATIONS

THE SPONGER

Nika Hazelton

I ONCE inadvertently fed a sponge to a horse. It was a foolish thing to do, since it cost me a lot of money and even more shame. It also left me with the unalterable conviction that horses are, in fact, rather stupid.

This is how it happened. I had come back from a vacation in Key West, where I had bought a number of real sponges to give to my friends in New York. The salesclerk assured me that Greek sponge fishermen from Tampa had brought them up from the deep especially for his shop. They were large, beautiful, dark yellow objects, altogether the finest sponges I had ever seen. My friends were delighted to receive them.

I had saved the nicest of these sponges for Elsa, a Danish friend of mine who lived with her husband on Washington Square. One Saturday afternoon I set off to visit them, carrying the sponge in my hand; it was unwrapped, for I had run out of wrapping paper. As I emerged from the subway near Elsa's house, I saw an unattended cart drawn by an elderly-looking horse. The horse and cart were just standing there, and, my curiosity aroused, I walked over to find out if the owner was anywhere around. The horse was patiently allowing me to pat its nose when I noticed that it had snatched the sponge from my other hand: I saw the last bit of yellow disappearing into its mouth. I was unconcerned at first and went on my way. But when I had almost reached Elsa's house, the realization of what had happened hit me. A horse could not possibly digest a sponge, I thought. Overwhelmed with remorse, I decided I'd better find the horse's owner to let him know of the incident.

Since the horse and cart stood not far from a bar, I went in to ask for help. (At that time of my life, I had never set foot alone in a bar.) As luck would have it, a solitary man sat at a table drinking beer. He seemed willing to talk, so I screwed up my courage and told him what had happened. He laughed, and identified himself as the owner of the cart and horse, and said that it did not matter what the horse ate. However, he took my address and phone number at *Fortune* magazine, where I was working at the time, and I went on to Elsa's.

Much to my surprise, about two weeks later the man phoned. No longer laughing, he told me that the horse was sick and that the horse doctor, a friend of his, wanted to take the animal to a horse hospital in the Bronx. Unfortunately, he could not afford this; and so, although he hated to, he had to ask me to pay up. I went and borrowed some money (I was earning $27.50 a week at the time) from Dwight Macdonald, and got the horse hospitalized for about $50. It was found out that the sponge, chewed into small pieces, was absorbing any fluid given to the four-legged patient, filling its stomach and prevent-

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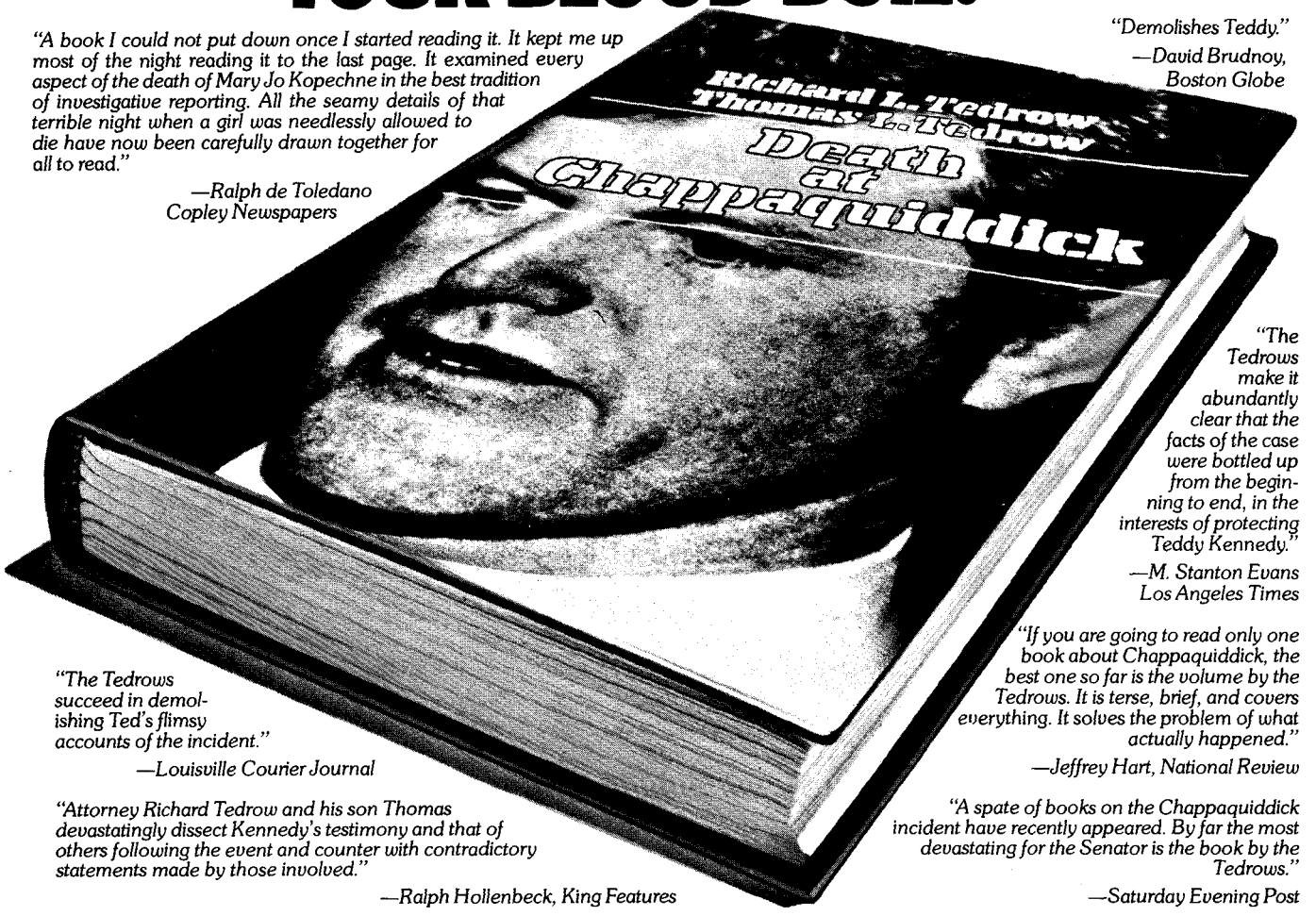

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ing it from eating. To make a long story short, the horse remained hospitalized for almost three weeks, and it cost me several hundred dollars to deliver it healthy again to its owner, who had phoned me every day to inform me of its progress. In the course of these conversations, I learned that the animal was called Alessandro, and that he had reached his quite respectable age as a workhorse, pulling the cart every day for his owner.

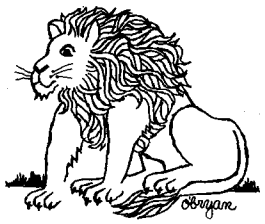
Meanwhile, the latter and I became quite attached to each other; I went to his house in an Italian enclave in the Bronx several times, and fraternized with his whole Italian-style family. I also stood as a godmother to his youngest son, who is now a lawyer practicing in New York.

P.S.: *The New Yorker*'s "Talk of the Town" section got hold of the whole story and wrote it up. I was not pleased. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Fire Down Below: A Journey of Exploration from Mexico to Chile, by Robert Harvey (Simon & Schuster, 304 pp., $19.95)

IN THIS BOOK'S opening section, on Central America, Robert Harvey seems like a caricature of the eccentric British traveler, modeled more on Basil Seal as played by Peter Sellers than on John Gunther, to whom he is compared in the publisher's blurb. He pulls into Tegucigalpa or wherever in a tearing hurry, peers shuddering into the nearest volcano, chats briefly with a fellow he meets in the bar, then dosses down for the night in a miserable fleabag of a hotel. Next morning he springs up, makes a five-minute call on the ambassador, hunts down a sinister army officer, whom he shrewdly asks what his men think of Democracy, then bounces over a potholed road to the airport and takes off for the next breathless stop in a flying jalopy that scrapes the tops of the jungle trees on takeoff. Another hectic day is under way! Mr. Harvey takes a dim view of Central America, which he compares with Kampuchea for its callous disregard for human life. (Rather beastly, all that killing, you know.) Fortunately the rest of the book is calmer, and much better. The author knows South America well, having visited its principal countries many times as correspondent for *The Economist*. He swiftly summarizes the history of each and then deals with the current political and economic situation. His conclusions, in almost every case, are discouraging; Mr. Harvey is no bleeding optimist, though he does close on an upbeat note. The writing in *Fire Down Below* is uneven. There are some vivid scenes and characters, but too often the author seems simply to have transcribed his rough field notes. But he does get around. He even includes a quick trip to Tierra del Fuego. Curiously, he virtually ignores the drug trade and its gangster *jefazos*, and since most of the billions of dollars the Latin American countries have been given or loaned were stolen or wasted, he thinks it might be a good idea for them to repudiate their foreign debts entirely.



ROBERT S. STROTHER

Changing Habits: A Memoir of the Society of the Sacred Heart, by VV Harrison (Doubleday, 320 pp., $18.95)

IN THE 1930s, Monica Baldwin, a Catholic nun and niece of British Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, caused a major scandal by publishing *I Leaped over the Wall*, a book about her escape from the convent. Today, ex-nuns are commonplace, as are nuns in mufti. How some of them got from there to here is the subject of this extensively researched book about what has happened to one teaching order, the Society of the Sacred Heart, over the past twenty years. It is not that these nuns leaped over their walls but that the insulating walls were torn down by a Vatican II directive that religious orders could be cloistered, or apostolic, but not mixed. Within a few years, the uncloistered Sacred Heart order, which had educated the daughters of the American Catholic elite for half a century, was in disarray, closing down or selling off its schools and colleges. What this dark night of the soul meant not only to the nuns but to the "children of the Sacred Heart," the former students, is what VV Harrison probes in *Changing Habits*. Miss Harrison, an unlikely child of the Sacred Heart, was rebellious, outraged, and confirmed in her nascent anti-Catholicism, when her parents entered her in the Sacred Heart convent at Eden Rock, Pennsylvania, her third boarding school in as many years. Initially she hated it. The nuns must have been forced to take their vows by some act of "unspeakable treachery or tragedy," thought the 15-year-old VV. But when, years later, she re-meets the now cigarette-smoking, Scotch-drinking, liberated, call-me-Peggy Mother Daley, she comments wryly: "My high-school dream had come true. Mother Daley was in the world with me, and I didn't like it one bit." VV Harrison is tough-minded in her appraisal of where the Society erred, where its failure to move with the times left the nuns vulnerable to temptation once the rules and routines of their daily lives were breached. It is her sensitive handling of what happened to the Mothers Tobin and Daley and Coakley and Forden, of the frailties and the strengths of these remarkable women, that mark this book with special grace. Attending Mass recently at Kenwood, once the order's novitiate, now a home for superannuated nuns, evokes bittersweet memories of Eden Rock: "I think of the long, black line, the familiar faces in fluted bonnets, the uplifted hands, the downcast eyes, the graceful, studied walk. That image now lives only in the hearts of those who experienced it." Miss Harrison goes a long way toward explaining for those who never experienced it why the Mothers of the Sacred Heart left such an indelible mark on generations of Catholic girls.

PRISCILLA L. BUCKLEY

Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram

A. M. ROSENTHAL:

The Hearings

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Personal

(NR extends maximum freedom in this column, but NR's maximum freedom may be another man's straitjacket. For NR box numbers only, send responses to NR Box ____, National Review, 150 E. 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016.)

TALL, GRACEFUL LADY, 50, colonial stock, teacher/counselor, law student. Loves languages, classical music, travel. Seeks intelligent, self-confident gentleman—equally honest, adaptable, kind. California. NR Box 6165.

QUALITY SAN FRANCISCO LASS: long, lean, cute, young 37, well balanced, fun. Enjoys people, laughter, nature. Desires friendship of responsible man, 35-47, possessing traditional values sprinkled with modern outlook. Non-smoker, non-druggie. NR Box 6166.

ALLURING, EDUCATED Filipina ladies (in Philippines) yearn for friendship, love, marriage. White Lotus International, P.O. Box 30633, Honolulu, Hawaii 96820.

STRAWBERRY BLONDE, 26, recently moved to Cincinnati, interested in meeting gentleman (23-35) to show her interesting aspects of city. Interests include baseball, import beers, S.F., talking for hours. NR Box 6163.

SINGLES. National directory for thinking singles. Loveline, P.O. Box 9524, Moscow, Idaho 83843.

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THE STORY AT EASTERN AIRLINES

NEW YORK, MARCH 17

CONCERNING THE Eastern Airlines strike, a few observations:

1. Representatives of the striking union (the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers) speak repeatedly, even as their placards reiterate the point, of a "fair" wage. What it is that makes for a just wage has been argued through the ages. There is general moral agreement on the proposition that a wage insufficient to sustain the life of a worker is at least unjust, and indeed the labor theory of wages, incorporated into Marxism, diagnosed the capitalist imperative as reducing to subsistence level all wages so as to maximize profits. Theologians in the Middle Ages tended to gather in greater and greater numbers around the maxim that a fair wage was *secundum estimationem fori*: that is, a fair wage is a reflection of the working of the marketplace.

Nobody is arguing that the machinists don't have a fair wage by subsistence standards, but it is certainly true that the Eastern machinists are being paid less than machinists who work for other airlines, and at $2 an hour less than the fraternity, there is bitter and understandable resentment. What to do about it?

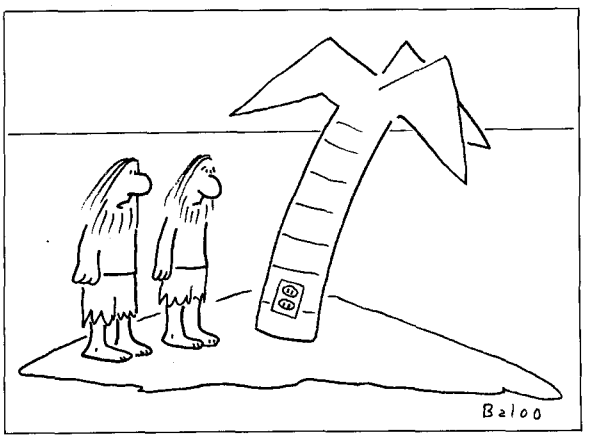
2. The "working of the marketplace" doesn't mean that the just wage is that offered by the managers of Eastern Airlines. It means those wages offered by Eastern that are acceptable to the Machinists Union. Well, Eastern has said:

—How can you expect us to pay higher wages given that we are at the present level of operations losing $1 million a day? Here you are asking for a wage package that would cost Eastern $150 million per year. This would add almost 50 per cent to our current monthly deficit.

—To which observation the Machinists tend to slur off into animadversions on the management of Frank Lorenzo, whose personality poses no threat to Perry Como's. It isn't easy to decoct the Machinists' message from the picket signs or from public pronouncements, but what they're saying is two things: that Eastern's management is seriously defective; and that Eastern is surreptitiously engaged in a fight to break the unions, even as Continental's unions were broken by the device of sliding into bankruptcy, and then out of it with, lo!—no unions.

3. Few analysts question that Eastern made some bad decisions during the past ten years. But the question then arises: When a business makes bad decisions, who is supposed to suffer? The stockholders obviously: they are on the primary line of fire, and should be. But it is inevitable that the company's workers will also suffer, because when a business enterprise takes a bad turn, either it dies, or else it struggles to stay alive, and this means it has to reduce the cost of supplying its product.

4. At this point in the classic labor-management struggle, the process of collective bargaining is employed. Now the president of the Machinists, Mr. William Winpisinger, is a socialist. He has a personality at least as abrasive as that of Mr. Lorenzo, and in that sense they are perfectly matched. With, however, this difference, namely that the socialist is quick to put a class-struggle aspect on any labor-management division, and indeed Mr. Winpisinger lost no chance to do this. And the epigoni jumped in. Sure enough, there was Jesse Jackson with his unerring eye for public mischief, joining the picketers and declaring that if Eastern's management can't run Eastern Airlines (Mr. Jackson means by that: give in to the union demands and continue operating), then let the workers run Eastern Airlines.



"I know—I've been wondering about that myself."

Now the trouble with analysis of this nature is that it begs all the critical questions. Even if we concede that Lorenzo Inc. isn't an effective manager of Eastern, what makes us think that Winpisinger Inc. would be an effective manager? Could the Machinists succeed in getting bank credit? I mean, other than from S&Ls? Barring that, would the Machinists Union be willing to bankroll Eastern, beginning with $1 million per day?

And then, 5) the Machinists Union thinks instantly of collective bargaining as putting all the forces of unionized work against: the management of Eastern. To this end the Eastern pilots have already refused to cross the picket lines, and Eastern is for all intents and purposes grounded. What Winpisinger wants (what he would love most is a national strike and then maybe nationalization of all the airlines) is to get other airlines to throttle down to minimum flight, and perhaps ground the passenger trains and—why not?—the taxis and buses. Mr. Bush has said he will not interfere with collective bargaining, but his spokesmen have also said that they will dig up and try to get passed through Congress a tough law against secondary boycotts.

What we have is the equivalent of the controllers' strike that faced Mr. Reagan in 1981. □

BAN THE GUNS?

NEW YORK, MARCH 20

I HAVE DONE a modest amount of hunting in my life, mostly in pursuit of game, though my professional training was to hunt down Germans and Japanese. So that when a couple of weeks ago President Bush said that he certainly wasn't going to ban the importation of semi-automatic rifles, aware that the debate had to do with the AK-47s and Uzi carbines being discussed in California, I wondered just what animals Mr. Bush had in mind as logical to hunt down with such weapons. I gave this a lot of thought, and suddenly I remembered the scene in *Gunga Din* in which the wild Indians threw—was it Cary Grant?—into a pit of poisonous adders. Well, he could

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certainly have used an AK-47 in that situation, no question about it. In fact there are odd situations in which odd forms of weaponry are useful.

The most frequently quoted Supreme Court decision ceding to the Federal Government the right to specify the species of weapons you can legally go out and purchase was *United States* v. *Miller*, and that was back in 1939, when the Court sustained the National Firearms Act of 1934, which required the registration of sawed-off shotguns. Quoth the Court, "In the absence of any evidence tending to show that possession or use of a shotgun having a barrel of less than 18 inches in length at this time has some reasonable relationship to the reservation or efficiency of a well-regulated militia, we cannot say that the Second Amendment guaranteed the right to keep and bear such an instrument."

Now actually, the *Miller* decision didn't finish the argument. Second Amendment zealots pointed out that rather than fight the case, the defendants (Miller and Layton) disappeared, and the result of this was that their case was half-heartedly argued. A lawyer conversant with the empirical record of weapons use might have pointed out, for instance, that thirty thousand short-barreled shotguns had been purchased by the United States Government and used in World War I as "trench guns" (and indeed, such weapons were used in World War II and through the Vietnam War). Besides which, legal students of the decision concede that the Court made the most substantial concession in the controversy in that it spoke of legal and, derivatively, illegal deprivations of the right of Miller to bear arms—and Miller was not a member of the state militia. This undercut the argument of the abolitionists that the Second Amendment to the Constitution is limited to protecting the state militias' right to bear arms.

In due course, George Bush retreated, but the problem of outlawing guns that can fire several dozen rounds per minute has hardly gone away. All that criminals need do now is to order guns domestically.

Those people and organizations who are adamant in believing in the basic right of the American citizen to bear arms, whether to kill game, or to wound and kill human beings bent on murder or rape, do much damage to their cause by taking voluptuarian pro-gun positions. Mr. Larry Pratt of the Gun Owners of America has said of the import ban, "It takes guns out of the hands of citizens in the face of rising criminal rage in this country." Well, that is formally true, but also could be said of whatever the law is that denies to a citizen the right to buy a howitzer. Wayne LaPierre of the National Rifle Association spoke more reasonably when he said, "Today's action, we trust, will end the rush to come up with ill-conceived and ill-defined legislative proposals."

Well, it won't. There are those around the country, for whom Judge Abner Mikva is the high priest, who believe that the way to stop people from killing other people is to stop the manufacture of the contrivances that are used to kill people. "Go after the criminal," said Mr. Bush, which is as sound a direction as you get from the best-trained pointer, who freezes when he spots a crouching pheasant in the brush. What you need to do then is to kill the bird, which means these days that you have to fire through a blanket of judicial and sentimental fog, of the kind that made us take ten years to execute Ted Bundy. On him, we should have used an AK-47 and pleaded guilty. □

RELIGION SCORNED

NEW YORK, MARCH 15

RELIGION HAS BEEN receiving a bad press these days, calling to mind Picasso's famous disparagement of his own work twenty years ago—is God taunting us by putting the spotlight on Jimmy Swaggart, the Ayatollah Khomeini, and John Bird Singer? The last, for irresponsible non-watchers of *60 Minutes*, was a Mormon fanatic who got himself excommunicated from his own church, drew his family reclusively to his cabin, where he stowed his wives and several thousand rounds of ammunition and more guns than General Custer had—but was killed in an exchange with federal and state troopers. His family lives on, uncorrected by experience. Is Swaggart's deviant lechery characteristic of evangelical Protestantism? Is Khomeini's genocidal search for schismatics and blasphemers a correct transcription of the word of Allah? Is an excommunicated Mormon paradoxically an example of the practicing Mormon?

On the one hand there are the aberrational representatives of religion who do the damage, but there are also, of course, the nominal Christians: and they do as much damage, in part because they have become so humdrum.

A few weeks ago I was seated next to a European figure so august that ladies curtsey when they are presented to him, and he was telling the table at which he sat about the great mischief being done by the missionaries in Venezuela who move in on native tribes and totally break down their cultural order, resulting in deracination and chaos. I cleared my throat and asked which of the Ten Commandments was responsible for bringing pandemonium to the poor Venezuelan savages.

The speaker hesitated for a moment, and said that, well, he was talking, so to speak, about the techniques used, to which the answer is of course that bad techniques are bad techniques, whether used by teachers, missionaries, lovers, or musicians, but one oughtn't to regret teaching, or evangelizing, or sex, or music because they are here and there sometimes practiced badly. But he seemed to be saying that it is inherent in the cultures of alien people that they should be left alone; to which one can only reply, as one would have done a generation ago when Margaret Mead discovered the unfettered joys of unfettered love in Samoa, that Christianity is the hallmark of civilization and it is an injunction of Christianity to go out in the world and teach the word of the Lord. Yes, even in the jungles of Venezuela and the beaches of Samoa and, for that matter, the pastures of Qum.

Granted that the Ten Commandments can convulse not only Venezuelan savages, but Park Avenue socialites. *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor*—imagine if that were to become a Zero Toleration law in Washington? One would come away with the impression that a nerve gas had frozen the vocal chords of the entire town. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife* . . . Thou shalt not WHAT?! People for the American Way would descend upon you and insist that you were violating the First, Fourth, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendments, the Declaration of Independence, and the Gettysburg Address if you held any such view. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods* would put the Democratic Party out of business.

SO THERE IS the sense in which Christianity is a continuing revolution against the ways of man beginning when he fled Paradise. But Christianity speaks also about forgiveness, yea, even to the sinner who has sinned seventy times seven times. And that is a great deal more than the Ayatollah is inclined to do, and very much more than the Incas or the Aztecs were inclined to do—or, for that matter, the fathers of the Inquisition. But the Christian religion is about how people ought to act, not how they do act, and European aristocrats ought to worry about savages who have been deprived of the knowledge of how they should act, rather than about non-savages who know how they should act, but do not do so.

Christianity has never been tried, the cliché runs. And of course it's true, but so is it true that Christianity has checked the movements of millions of men and women who, but for the pull of dogma, would know no vital brake upon their behavior. Sometimes the brake is effective, sometimes it is not. But that it should be there outweighs any concern over the excesses of Jimmy Swaggart or the Ayatollah or the Mormon extremist, or the Venezuelan savage—or the European relativist. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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DAVE BARRY IRUE STORY

TRANS-O-GRAM / KEM PUTNEY

DEFINITIONS

A. March at 180 paces per minute — D O U B L E T I M E / 84 61 79 94 47 121 9 71 104 35

B. The all-American dessert (2 words) — A P P L E P I E / 21 98 64 110 127 33 133 50

C. A booster is one kind — V A G C N A T I O N / 13 97 70 46 137 30 123 76 1 24 134

D. He was number 34 — E I S E N H O W E R / 107 95 85 143 8 17 132 36 54 149

E. Declare *persona non grata* — B L A C K L I S T / 144 126 27 6 40 66 20 90 19

F. City in eastern New York State — A M S T E R D A M / 140 124 136 63 93 12 51 116 22

G. Butler of note — R H E T T / 39 115 129 86 72

H. U.S. airlines were once this — R E G U L A T E D / 58 135 146 11 100 3 114 83 44

I. Site of 1923 Japanese quake — Y O K O H A M A / 15 105 150 38 77 87 26 48

J. Double-dealing (hyph.) — T W O T I M I N G / 141 139 65 55 111 131 102 23 96

K. Like something in Denmark? — R O T T E N / 106 119 52 16 89 34

L. Go from second to third gear — U P S H I F T / 32 99 10 56 81 118 91

M. Welcome item at tax time — EXEMPTION / DEDUCTION — 45 122 14 60 108 25 74 148 2

N. Enjoying champagne — S I P P I N G / 130 67 125 147 57 75 31

O. Like a gamin's clothing — T A T T E R E D / 88 42 112 68 101 4 78 59

P. Rhyming Wisconsin city — O S H K O S H / 109 103 92 28 138 43 53

Q. *Wein aus Deutschland* (2 words) — R H I N E W I N E / 120 142 145 117 5 41 29 80 69

R. Timely Beatles hit — Y E S T E R D A Y / 73 113 62 82 7 49 128 18 37

1 C I	2 M N		3 H A		4 O R	5 Q E	6 E C	7 R E	8 D N	9 A T		10 L S	11 H U	12 F R	13 C V	14 M E	15 I Y
	16 K T	17 D H	18 R A	19 E T		20 E I		21 B A	22 F M		23 J N	24 C O	25 M T		26 I M	27 E A	28 P K
29 Q I	30 C N	31 N G		32 L U	33 B P		34 K N	35 A E	36 D W		37 R Y	38 I O	39 C R	40 E K		41 Q W	42 O A
43 P S		44 H D	45 M E	46 C C	47 A L	48 I A	49 R R	50 B E	51 F D		52 K T	53 P H	54 D E		55 J T	56 L H	57 N I
58 H R	59 O D		60 M M	61 A O	62 R S	63 F T		64 B P	65 J O	66 E L	67 N I	68 O T	69 Q E		70 C C	71 A I	72 G T
73 R Y		74 M I	75 N N		76 C T	77 I H	78 O E		79 A U	80 Q N	81 L I	82 R T	83 H E	84 A D		85 D S	86 G T
87 I A	88 O T	89 K E	90 E S		91 L T	92 P H	93 F E		94 A B	95 D I	96 J G		97 C A	98 B P	99 L P	100H L	101O E
	102J I	103P S		104A M	105I O	106K R	107D E		108M P	109P O	110B L	111J I	112O T	113R E		114H T	115C H
116F A	117Q N		118L F	119K O	120Q R		121A E	122M X	123C A	124F M	125N P	126E L	127B E		128R D	129G E	130N S
	131J M	132D O	133B I	134C N	135H E	136F S		137C I	138P O	139J W	140F A		141J T	142Q H	143D E		144E B
145Q I	146H G		147N P	148M O	149D R	150I K											

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition. **See page 52 for solution to last Trans-O-Gram.**

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